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**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
JOHN WESLEY, VOLUME 10
LETTERS, ESSAYS, DIALOGS
AND ADDRESSES**

by John Wesley

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THE WORKS
OF
JOHN WESLEY

Third Edition

Complete and unabridged
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VOLUME X

Letters, Essays, Dialogs, Addresses

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A LETTER

TO

THE REVEREND DR. CONYERS MIDDLETON.

OCCASIONED BY HIS LATE “FREE INQUIRY.”

January 4, 1748-9.

REVEREND SIR,

1. IN your late “Inquiry,” you endeavor to prove,
 First, that there were no miracles wrought in the primitive Church:
 Secondly, that all the primitive Fathers were fools or knaves, and most of
 them both one and the other. And it is easy to observe, the whole tenor of
 your argument tends to prove,
 Thirdly, that no miracles were wrought by Christ or his Apostles; and,
 Fourthly, that these too were fools or knaves, or both.

2. I am not agreed with you on any of these heads. My reasons I shall lay
 before you, in as free a manner, though not in so smooth or labored
 language, as you have laid yours before the world.

3. But I have neither inclination nor leisure to follow you, step by step,
 through three hundred and seventy-three quarto pages. I shall therefore set
 aside all I find in your work which does not touch the merits of the cause;
 and likewise contract the question itself to the three first centuries. For I
 have no more to do with the writers or miracles of the fourth, than with
 those of the fourteenth, century.

4. You will naturally ask, “Why do you stop there? What reason can you
 give for this? If you allow miracles before the empire became Christian,
 why not afterwards too?” I answer, Because, “after the empire became

Christian,” (they are your own words,) “a general corruption both of faith and morals infected the Christian Church; which, by that revolution, as St. Jerome says, ‘lost as much of her virtue, as it had gained of wealth and power.’” (Page 123.) And this very reason St. Chrysostom himself gave in the words you have afterwards cited: “There are some who ask, Why are not miracles performed still? Why are there no persons who raise the dead and cure diseases?” To which he replies, that it was owing to the want of faith, and virtue, and piety in those times.

1. You begin your preface by observing, that the “Inquiry” was intended to have been published some time ago; but, upon reflection, you resolved to “give out, first, some sketch of what you was projecting;” (page 1;) and accordingly “published The ‘Introductory Discourse,’” by itself, though “foreseeing it would encounter all the opposition that prejudice, bigotry, and superstition are ever prepared to give to all inquiries” of this nature. (Page 2.) But it was your “comfort, that this would excite candid inquirers to weigh the merit and consequences of it.” (Page 3.)

2. The consequences of it are tolerably plain, even to free the good people of England from all that prejudice, bigotry, and superstition, vulgarly called Christianity. But it is not so plain, that “this is the sole expedient which can secure the Protestant religion against the efforts of Rome.” (*Ibid.*) It may be doubted, whether Deism is the sole expedient to secure us against Popery. For some are of opinion, there are persons in the world who are neither Deists nor Papists.

3. You open the cause artfully enough, by a quotation from Mr. Locke. (Page 4.) But we are agreed to build our faith on no man’s authority. His reasons will be considered in their place.

“Those who have written against his and your opinion,” you say, “have shown great eagerness, but little knowledge of the question: Urged by the hopes of honors, and prepared to fight for every establishment that offers such pay to its defenders.” (Page 5.) I have not read one of these; yet I would fain believe, that neither the hope of honor, nor the desire of pay, was the sole, or indeed the main, motive that urged either them or you to engage in writing.

But I grant they are overseen, if they argue against you by citing “the testimonies of the ancient Fathers;” (page 6;) seeing they might easily perceive you pay no more regard to these than to the Evangelists or Apostles. Neither do I commend them if they “insinuate jealousies of consequences dangerous to Christianity.” (*Ibid.*) Why they should insinuate these, I cannot conceive: I need not insinuate that the sun shines at noon-day. You have “opened too great a glare to the public,” (page 7,) to leave them any room for such insinuation. Though, to save appearances, you gravely declare still, “Were my argument allowed to be true, the credit of the gospel miracles could not, in any degree, be shaken by it.” (Page 6.)

4. So far is flourish. Now we come to the point: “The present question,” you say, “depends on the joint credibility of the facts, and of the witnesses who attest them, especially” on the former. For, “if the facts be incredible, no testimony can alter the nature of things.” (Page 9.) All this is most true. You go on: “The credibility of facts lies open to the trial of our reason and senses. But the credibility of witnesses depends on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us. And though in many cases it may reasonably be presumed, yet in none can it be certainly known.” (Page 10.) Sir, will you retract this, or defend it? If you defend, and can prove, as well as assert it, then farewell the credit of all history, not only sacred but profane. If “the credibility of witnesses,” of all witnesses, (for you make no distinction,) depends, as you peremptorily affirm, “on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us;” and, consequently, “though it may be presumed in many cases, yet can be certainly known in none;” then it is plain, all the history of the Bible is utterly precarious and uncertain; then I may indeed presume, but cannot certainly know, that Jesus of Nazareth ever was born; much less that he healed the sick, and raised either Lazarus or himself from the dead. Now, Sir, go and declare again how careful you are for “the credit of the gospel miracles!”

5. But for fear any (considering how “frank and open” your nature is, and how “warmly disposed to speak what you take to be true”) (page 7) should fancy you meant what you said in this declaration, you take care to inform them soon after: “The whole which the wit of man can possibly discover, either of the ways or will of the Creator, must be acquired by

attending seriously” (to what? to the Jewish or Christian Revelation? No; but) “to that revelation which he made of himself from the beginning, in the beautiful fabric of this visible world.” (Page 22.)

6. I believe your opponents will not hereafter urge you, either with that passage from St. Mark, or any other from Scripture. At least, I will not, unless I forget myself; as I observe you have done just now. For you said but now, “Before we proceed to examine testimonies for the decision of this dispute, our first care should be, to inform ourselves of the nature of those miraculous powers which are the subject of it, as they are represented to us in the history of the gospel.” (Page 10.) Very true; “this should be our first care.” I was therefore all attention to hear your account of “the nature of those powers, as they are represented to us in the gospel.” But, alas! you say not a word more about it; but slip away to those “zealous champions who have attempted” (bold men as they are) “to refute the ‘Introductory Discourse.’” (Page 11.)

Perhaps you will say, “Yes, I repeat that text from St. Mark.” You do; yet not describing the nature of those powers; but only to open the way to “one of your antagonists;” (page 12;) of whom you yourself affirm, that “not one of them seems to have spent a thought in considering those powers as they are set forth in the New Testament.” (Page 11.) Consequently, the bare repeating that text does not prove you (any more than them) to have “spent one thought upon the subject.”

7. From this antagonist you ramble away to another; after a long citation from whom, you subjoin: “It being agreed then that, in the original promise, there is no intimation of any particular period, to which their continuance was limited.” (Pages 13, 14.) Sir, you have lost your way. We have as yet nothing to do with their continuance. “For till we have learned from those sacred records” (I use your own words) “what they were, and in what manner exerted by the Apostles, we cannot form a proper judgment of those evidences which are brought either to confirm or confute their continuance in the Church; and must consequently dispute at random, as chance or prejudice may prompt us, about things unknown to us.” (Page 11.)

Now, Sir, if this be true, (as without doubt it is,) then it necessarily follows, that, seeing from the beginning of your book to the end, you spend not one page to inform either yourself or your readers concerning the nature of these miraculous powers, “as they are represented to us in the history of the gospel;” you dispute throughout the whole “at random, as chance or prejudice prompts you, about things unknown to you.”

8. Your reply to “the adversaries of your scheme,” (pages 15-27,) I may let alone for the present; and the rather, because the arguments used therein will occur again and again. Only I would here take notice of one assertion, “that the miraculous powers conferred on the Apostles themselves were imparted just at the moment of their exertion, and withdrawn again as soon as those particular occasions were served.” (Page 23.) You should not have asserted this, be it true or false, without some stronger proof. “This, I say, is evident,” (*Ibid.*) is not a sufficient proof; nor, “A treatise is prepared on that subject.” (Page 24.) Neither is it proved by that comment of Grotius on our Lord’s promise,¹ which, literally translated, runs thus: “To every believer there was then given some wonderful power, which was to exert itself, not indeed always, but when there was occasion.”

9. But waving this, I grant “the single point in dispute is, whether the testimony of the Fathers be a sufficient ground to believe, that miraculous gifts subsisted at all after the days of the Apostles.” (Page 27.) But with this you interweave another question, whether the Fathers were not all fools or knaves. In treating of which, you strongly intimate, — First, that such gifts did never subsist; and, Secondly, that the Apostles were equally wise and good with the “wonder-workers” (your favorite term) that followed them.

When therefore you add, “My opinion is this, that, after our Lord’s ascension, the extraordinary gifts he had promised were poured out on the Apostles, and the other primary instruments of planting the gospel, in order to enable them to overrule the inveterate prejudices both of the Jews and Gentiles, and to bear up against the discouraging shocks of popular rage and persecution;” (page 28;) I look upon all this to be mere grimace. You believe not one word of what you say. You cannot possibly, if you

believe what you said before. For who can believe both the sides of a contradiction?

10. However, I will suppose you do believe it, and will argue with you from your own words. But first let us have a few more of them: "In process of time, as miraculous powers began to be less and less wanted, so they began gradually to decline, till they were finally withdrawn." (Page 29.) "And this may probably be thought to have happened while some of the Apostles were still living."

These were given, you say, to the first planters of the gospel, "in order to enable them to overrule the inveterate prejudices both of Jews and Gentiles, and to bear up against the shocks of persecution." Thus far we are agreed. They were given for these ends. But if you allow this, you cannot suppose, consistently with yourself, that they were withdrawn till these ends were fully answered. So long, therefore, as those prejudices subsisted, and Christians were exposed to the shocks of persecution, you cannot deny but there was the same occasion for those powers to be continued, as there was for their being given at first. And this, you say, is "a postulatam which all people will grant, that they continued as long as they were necessary to the Church." (Page 11.)

11. Now, did those prejudices cease, or was persecution at an end, while some of the Apostles were still living? You have yourself abundantly shown they did not. You know there was as sharp persecution in the third century, as there was in the first, while all the Apostles were living. And with regard to prejudices, you have industriously remarked, that "the principal writers of Rome, who make any mention of the Christians, about the time of Trajan, speak of them as a set of despicable, stubborn, and even wicked enthusiasts;" (page 193;) that "Suetonius calls them 'a race of men of a new and mischievous superstition;'" (page 194;) and that "Tacitus, describing the horrible tortures which they suffered under Nero, says, 'They were detested for their flagitious practices; possessed with an abominable superstition; and condemned, not so much for their supposed crime of firing the city, as from the hatred of all mankind.'" (*Ibid.*)

And “their condition,” you say, “continued much the same, till they were established by the civil power; during all which time they were constantly insulted and calumniated by their heathen adversaries, as a stupid, credulous, impious sect, the very scum of mankind.” (Page 195.) In a word, both with regard to prejudice and persecution, I read in your following page:

“The heathen magistrates would not give themselves the trouble to make the least inquiry into their manners or doctrines; but condemned them for the mere name, without examination or trial; treating a Christian of course as guilty of every crime, as an enemy of the gods, emperors, laws, and of nature itself.” (Page 196.)

12. If then the end of those miraculous powers was, “to overcome inveterate prejudices, and to enable the Christians to bear up against the shocks of persecution,” how can you possibly conceive that those powers should cease while some of the Apostles were living? With what color can you assert, that they were less wanted for these ends, in the second and third, than in the Apostolic, age? With what shadow of reason can you maintain, that (if they ever subsisted at all) they were finally withdrawn before Christianity was established by the civil power? Then indeed these ends did manifestly cease; persecution was at an end; and the inveterate prejudices which had so long obtained were in great measure rooted up; another plain reason why the powers which were to balance these should remain in the Church so long, and no longer.

13. You go on to acquaint us with the excellences of your performance. “The reader,” you say, “will find in these sheets none of those arts which are commonly employed by disputants to perplex a good cause, or to palliate a bad one; no subtile refinements, forced constructions, or evasive distinctions; but plain reasoning, grounded on plain facts, and published with an honest and disinterested view to free the minds of men from an inveterate imposture. I have shown that the ancient Fathers, by whom that delusion was imposed, were extremely credulous and superstitious; possessed with strong prejudices, and scrupling no art or means by which they might propagate the same.” (Page 31.) Surely, Sir, you add the latter part of this paragraph, on purpose to confute the former; for just here you

use one of the unfairest arts which the most dishonest disputant can employ, in endeavoring to forestall the judgment of the reader, and to prejudice him against those men on whom he ought not to pass any sentence before he has heard the evidence.

1. In the beginning of your “Introductory Discourse,” you declare the reasons which moved you to publish it. One of these, you say, was the late increase of Popery in this kingdom; (page 41;) chiefly occasioned, as you suppose, by the confident assertions of the Romish emissaries, that there has been a succession of miracles in their Church from the apostolic to the present age. To obviate this plea, you would “settle some rule of discerning the true from the false; so as to give a reason for admitting the miracles of one age, and rejecting those of another.” (Page 44.)

2. This has a pleasing sound, and is extremely well imagined to prejudice a Protestant reader in your favor. You then slide with great art into your subject: “This claim of a miraculous power, now peculiar to the Church of Rome, was asserted in all Christian countries till the Reformation.” (*Ibid.*) But then “the cheat was detected:” (Page 45;) Nay, and men began to “suspect that the Church had long been governed by the same arts.” “For, it was easy to trace them up to the primitive Church, though not to fix the time when the cheat began; to show how long after the days of the Apostles the miraculous gifts continued in the Church.” (Page 46.) However, it is commonly believed, that they continued till Christianity was the established religion. Some indeed extend them to the fourth and fifth centuries; (page 50;) but these, you say, betray the Protestant cause. (Page 51.) “For in the third, fourth, and fifth, the chief corruptions of Popery were introduced, or at least the seeds of them sown. By these I mean, monkery; the worship of relics; invocation of saints; prayers for the dead; the superstitious use of images, of the sacraments, of the sign of the cross, and of the consecrated oil.” (Page 52.)

3. I have nothing to do with the fourth or fifth century. But to what you allege in support of this charge, so far as it relates to the third century, I have a few things to reply.

And, First, you quote not one line from any Father in the third century, in favor of monkery, the worship of relics, the invocation of saints, or the superstitious use either of images or consecrated oil. How is this, Sir? You brought eight accusations at once against the Fathers of the third, as well as the following centuries: And as to five of the eight, when we call for the proof, you have not one word to say! As to the sixth, you say, "In the sacrament of the Eucharist, several abuses were introduced." (Page 57.) You instance, first, ill mixing the wine with water. But how does it appear that this was any abuse at all? or, that "Irenaeus declared it to have been taught as well as practiced by our Savior?" (*Ibid.*) The words you quote to prove this, do not prove it at all, they simply relate a matter of fact: "Taking the bread, he confessed it to be his body; and the mixed cup, he affirmed it was his blood" ² You cannot be ignorant of this fact, that the cup used after the paschal supper was always mixed with water. But "Cyprian declared this mixture to have been enjoined to himself by a divine revelation." (Page 58.) If he did, that will not prove it to be an abuse: So that you are wide of the point still. You instance next in their sending the bread to the sick; which (as well as the mixture) is mentioned by Justin Martyr. This fact, likewise, we allow; but you have not proved it to be an abuse. I grant, that, near an hundred years after, some began to have a superstitious regard for this bread. But that in "Tertullian's days it was carried home and locked up as a divine treasure," I call upon you to prove; as also that infant communion was an abuse; or the styling it "the sacrifice of the body of Christ." (Page 59.) I believe the offering it up for the Martyrs was an abuse; and that this, with the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, were, if not the earliest of all, yet as early as any which crept into the Christian Church.

4. It; is certain, "praying for the dead was common in the second century." (Page 60.) You might have said, "And in the first also;" seeing that petition, "Thy kingdom come," manifestly concerns the saints in paradise, as well as those upon earth. But it is far from certain, that "the purpose of this was to procure relief and refreshment to the departed souls in some intermediate state of expiatory pains;" or that "this was the general opinion of those times."

5. As to the “consecrated oil,” (page 63,) you seem entirely to forget that it was neither St. Jerome, nor St. Chrysostom, but St. James, who said, “Is any sick among you? Let him send for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.” (Chap. 5:14, 15.)

The sum is: You have charged the Fathers of the third century with eight of the chief corruptions of Popery:

- (1.) Monkeny;
- (2.) The worship of relics;
- (3.) Invocation of saints;
- (4.) The superstitious use of images;
- (5.) Of the consecrated oil;
- (6.) Of the sacraments;
- (7.) Of the sign of the cross;
- (8.) Praying for the dead.

And what is all this heavy charge come to at last? Why, just thus much: Some of them, in the beginning of the third century, did superstitiously use the sign of the cross; and others, in the middle of that century, offered up the Eucharist for the Martyrs on their annual festivals; though how you make this “the superstitious use of the sacraments,” I know not, or how these come to be the “chief corruptions of Popery.”

Praying thus far for the dead, “that God would shortly accomplish the number of his elect and hasten his kingdom,” and anointing the sick with oil, you will not easily prove to be any corruptions at all.

As to monkeny, the worship of relics, invocation of saints, and the superstitious use of images, you have not even attempted to prove that these Fathers were guilty: So that, for aught appears, you might as well have charged them on the Apostles. “Yet it is no more,” you solemnly assure us, “than what fact and truth oblige you to say!” (Page 65.) When I meet with any of these assurances for the time to come, I shall remember to stand upon my guard.

6. In the following pages you are arguing against the miracles of the fourth and fifth century. After which you add: “But if these must be rejected, where then are we to stop? And to what period must we confine ourselves? This, indeed, is the grand difficulty, and what has puzzled all the other doctors who have considered the same question before me.” (Page 71.) Sir, your memory is short. In this very Discourse you yourself said just the contrary. You told us awhile ago, that, not only Dr. Marshall, Dr. Dodwell, and Archbishop Tillotson, but the generality of the Protestant Doctors, were agreed to what period they should confine themselves; believing that miracles subsisted through the three first centuries and ceased in the beginning of the fourth. (Page 46, *et seq.*)

7. However, that none of them may ever be puzzled and more, you will “lay down some general principles, which may lead us to a more rational solution of the matter than any that has hitherto been offered.” (*Ibid.*) Here again I was all attention. And what did the mountain bring forth? What are these general principles, preceded by so solemn a declaration, and laid down for thirteen pages together? (Pages 71-84.) Why, they are dwindled down into one, “that the forged miracles of the fourth century taint the credit of all the later miracles!” I should desire you to prove, that the miracles of the fourth century were all forged, but that it is not material to our question.

8. But you endeavor to show it is: “For that surprising confidence,” you say, “with which the Fathers of the fourth age have affirmed as true what they themselves had forged, or, at least, knew to be forged,” (a little more proof of that,) “makes us suspect, that so bold a defiance of truth could not become general at once, but must have been carried gradually to that height by custom and the example of former times.” (Page 84.) It does not appear that it did become general till long after the fourth century. And as this supposition is not sufficiently proved, the inference from it is nothing worth.

9. You say, Secondly, “This age, in which Christianity was established, had no occasion for any miracles. They would not, therefore, begin to forge miracles at a time when there was no particular temptation to it.” (*Ibid.*) Yes, the greatest temptation in the world, if they were such men as

you suppose. If they were men that would scruple no art or means to enlarge their own credit and authority, they would naturally “begin to forge miracles” at that time when real miracles were no more.

10. You say, Thirdly, “The later Fathers had equal piety with the earlier, but more learning and less credulity. If these, then, be found either to have forged miracles themselves, or propagated what they knew to be forged, or to have been deluded by the forgeries of others, it must excite the same suspicion of their predecessors.” (Page 85.) I answer,

- (1.) It is not plain that the later Fathers had equal piety with the earlier: Nor,
- (2.) That they had less credulity. It seems, some of them had much more: Witness Hilarion’s camel, and smelling a devil or a sinner; though even he was not so quick-scented as St. Pachomius, who (as many believe to this day) could “smell a heretic at a mile’s distance.” (*Free Inquiry*, pages 89, 90.) But if,
- (3.) The earlier Fathers were holier than the later, they were not only less likely to delude others, but (even on Plato’s supposition) to be deluded themselves: For they would have more assistance from God.

11. But you say, Fourthly, “The earlier ages of the Church were not purer than the later. Nay, in some respects they were worse. For there never was any age in which so many rank heresies were professed, or so many spurious books forged and published, under the names of Christ and his Apostles; several of which are cited by the most eminent Fathers of those ages; as of equal authority with the Scriptures. And none can doubt but those who would forge, or make use of forged books, would make use of forged miracles.” (*Introductory Discourse*, pages 86, 87.)

I answer,

- (1.) It is allowed that before the end of the third century the Church was greatly degenerated from its first purity. Yet I doubt not,
- (2.) But abundantly more rank heresies have been publicly professed in many later ages; but they were not publicly protested against, and therefore historians did not record them.

- (3.) You cannot but know it has always been the judgment of learned men, (which you are at liberty to refute if you are able,) that the far greater part of those spurious books have been forged by heretics; and that many more were compiled by weak, well-meaning men, from what had been orally delivered down from the Apostles. But,
- (4.) There have been in the Church from the beginning men who had only the name of Christians. And these, doubtless, were capable of pious frauds, so called. But this ought not to be charged upon the whole body. Add to this,
- (5.) What is observed by Mr. Daille: “I impute a great part of this mischief to those men who, before the invention of printing, were the transcribers and copiers out of manuscripts. We may well presume that these men took the same liberty in forging as St. Jerome complains they did in corrupting books; especially since this course was beneficial to them, which the other was not.” Much more to the same effect we have in his treatise “Of the Right Use of the Fathers,” Part 1., chapter 3. N. B. These transcribers were not all Christians; no, not in name; perhaps few, if any of them, in the first century.
- (6.) By what evidences do you prove, that these spurious books “are frequently cited by the most eminent Fathers, as not only genuine, but of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves?” or, Lastly, that they either forged these books themselves, or made use of what they knew to be forged? These things also you are not to take for granted, but to prove, before your argument can be of force.

12. We are come at last to your general conclusion: “There is no sufficient reason to believe, that any miraculous powers subsisted in any age of the Church after the times of the Apostles.” (Page 91.)

But pretended miracles, you say, arose thus: “As the high authority of the apostolic writings excited some of the most learned Christians” (prove that!) “to forge books under their names; so the great fame of the apostolic miracles would naturally excite some of the most crafty, when the Apostles were dead, to attempt some juggling tricks in imitation of them.

And when these artful pretenders had maintained their ground through the first three centuries, the leading Clergy of the fourth understood their interest too well to part with the old plea of miraculous gifts.” (Page 92.)

Round assertions indeed! But surely, Sir, you do not think that reasonable men will take these for proofs! You are here advancing a charge of the blackest nature. But where are your vouchers? Where are the witnesses to support it? Hitherto you have not been able to produce one, through a course of three hundred years; unless you bring in those Heathen, of whose senseless, shameless prejudices you have yourself given so clear an account.

But you designed to produce your witnesses in the “Free Inquiry,” a year or two after the “Introductory Discourse” was published. So you condemn them first, and try them afterwards: You will pass sentence now, and hear the evidence by and by! A genuine specimen of that “impartial regard to truth,” which you profess upon all occasions.

13. Another instance of this is in your marginal note: “The primitive Christians were perpetually reproached for their gross credulity.” They were; but by whom? Why, by Jews and Heathens. Accordingly, the two witnesses you produce here are Celsus the Jew, and Julian the apostate. But lest this should not suffice, you make them confess the charge: “The Fathers,” your words are, “defend themselves by saying, that they did no more than the philosophers had always done: That Pythagoras’s precepts were inculcated with an *ipse dixit*, and they found the same method useful with the vulgar.” (Page 93.) And is this their whole defence? Do the very men to whom you refer, Origen and Arnobius, in the very tracts to which you refer, give no other answer than this argument *ad hominem*? Stand this as another genuine proof of Dr. Middleton’s candor and impartiality!

14. A further proof of your “frank and open nature,” and of your “contenting yourself with the discharge of your own conscience, by a free declaration of your real sentiments,” (page 40,) I find in the very next phase. Here you solemnly declare “Christianity is confirmed by the evidence of such miracles as, of all others on record, are the least liable to exception, and carry the clearest marks of their sincerity; being wrought by

Christ and his Apostles for an end so great, so important, as to be highly worthy the interposition of the Deity; wrought by mean and simple men, and delivered by eye-witnesses, whose characters exclude the suspicion of fraud.” (Page 94.) Sir, do you believe one word of what you so solemnly declare? You have yourself declared the contrary. But if you do not, where shall we have you? Or how can we believe you another time? How shall we know, I will not say, when you speak truth, but when you would have us think you do? By what criterion shall we distinguish between what is spoken in your real, and what in your personated, character? how discern when you speak as Dr. Middleton, and when as the public librarian?

15. You go on: “By granting the Romanists but a single age of miracles after the Apostles, we shall be entangled in difficulties, whence we can never extricate ourselves till we allow the same powers to the present age.” (Page 96.) I will allow them, however, three ages of miracles, and let them make what advantage of it they can.

You proceed: “If the Scriptures are a complete rule,” (I reject the word *sufficient*, because it is ambiguous,) “we do not want the Fathers as guides, or, if clear, as interpreters. An esteem for them has carried many into dangerous errors; the neglect of them can have no ill consequences.” (Page 97.) I answer,

- (1.) The Scriptures are a complete rule of faith and practice; and they are clear in all necessary points. And yet their clearness does not prove, that they need not be explained; nor their completeness, that they need not be enforced.
- (2.) ith, but next to, the Scriptures, never carried any man yet into dangerous errors, nor probably ever will. But it has brought many out of dangerous errors, and particularly out of the errors of Popery.
- (3.) The neglect, in your sense, of the primitive Fathers, that is, the thinking they were all fools and knaves, has this natural consequence, (which I grant is no ill one, according to your principles,) to make all who are not real Christians think Jesus of Nazareth and his Apostles just as honest and wise as them.

16. You afterwards endeavor to show how the Church of England came to have such an esteem for the ancient Fathers. There are several particulars in this account which are liable to exception. But I let them pass, as they have little connection with the point in question.

17. You conclude your “Introductory Discourse” thus: “The design of the present treatise is to fix the religion of the Protestants on its proper basis, that is, on the sacred Scriptures.” (Page 111.) Here again you speak in your personated character; as also when you “freely own the primitive writers to be of use in attesting and transmitting to us the genuine books of the holy Scriptures!” (Page 112.) Books, for the full attestation as well as safe transmission whereof, you have doubtless the deepest concern!

18. I cannot dismiss this Discourse without observing, that the uncommon artfulness and disingenuity which glare through the whole, must needs give disgust to every honest and upright heart; nor is it any credit at all to the cause you have espoused. Nay, I am persuaded there are many in these kingdoms, who, though they think as you do concerning the Christian system, yet could not endure the thought of writing against it in the manner that you have done; of combating fraud (if it were so) with fraud, and practicing the very thing which they professed to expose and abhor.

In your “Free Inquiry” itself, you propose, —

- “I. To draw out in order all the principal testimonies which relate to miraculous gifts, as they are found in the writings of the Fathers, from the earliest ages after the Apostles; whence we shall see, at one view, the whole evidence by which they have hitherto been supported.
- “II. To throw together all which those Fathers have delivered, concerning the persons said to have been endued with those gifts.” (Page 1.)
- “III. To illustrate the particular characters and opinions of the Fathers who attest those miracles.
- “IV. To review all the several kinds of miracles which are pretended to have been wrought, and to observe from the nature of each how far they may reasonably be suspected.
- “V. To refute some of the most plausible objections which have been hitherto made.” (Page 2.)

I was in hopes you would have given, at least in entering upon your main work, what you promised so long ago, an account; of “the proper nature and condition of those miraculous powers which are the subject of the whole dispute, as they are represented to us in the history of the gospel.” (*Preface*, page 10.) But as you do not appear to have any thought of doing it at all, you will give me leave at length to do it for you.

The original promise of these runs thus: “These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mark. 16:17, 18.)

A further account is given of them by St. Peter, on the very day whereon that promise was fulfilled: “This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” (Acts 2:16, 17.)

The account given by St. Paul is a little fuller than this: “There are diversities of gifts,” (*χαρισμάτων*, the usual scriptural term for the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost,) “but the same Spirit: For to one is given the word of wisdom; to another the gifts of healing; to another the working of” other “miracles; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another diverse kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. All these worketh that one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11.)

Hence we may observe, that the chief *χαρίσματα*, *spiritual gifts*, conferred on the apostolical Church, were,

1. Casting out devils:
2. Speaking with new tongues:
3. Escaping dangers, in which otherwise they must have perished:
4. Healing the sick:
5. Prophecy, foretelling things to come:
6. Visions:
7. Divine dreams: And,
8. Discerning of spirits.

Some of these appear to have been chiefly designed for the conviction of Jews and Heathens, — as the casting out devils and speaking with new tongues; some, chiefly for the benefit of their fellow-Christians, — as healing the sick, foretelling things to come, and the discernment of spirits; and all, in order to enable those who either wrought or saw them, to “run with patience the race set before them,” through all the storms of persecution which the most inveterate prejudice, rage, and malice could raise against them.

I.

1. You are, First, “to draw out in order all the principal testimonies which relate to miraculous gifts, as they are found in the writings of the Fathers from the earliest ages after the Apostles.”

You begin with the apostolic Fathers; that is, those who lived and conversed with the Apostles. “There are several,” you say; “of this character, whose writings still remain to us: St. Barnabas, St. Clemens, St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, St. Hermas. Now, if those gifts had subsisted after the days of the Apostles, these must have possessed a large share of them. But if any of them had, he would have mentioned it in his writings, which not one of them has done.” (Page 3.)

The argument, fully proposed, runs thus: —

If any such gifts had subsisted in them, or in their days, they must have mentioned them in their circular Epistles to the Churches; (for so their predecessors, the Apostles, did;) but they did not mention any such gifts therein.

Sir, your consequence is not of any force; as will easily appear by a parallel argument: —

If such gifts had subsisted in St. Peter, or in his days, he must have mentioned them in his circular Epistles to the Churches. But he does not mention any such gifts therein. Therefore, they did not subsist in him, or in his days.

Your argument therefore proves too much: Nor can it conclude against an apostolic Father, without concluding against the Apostle too.

If therefore the apostolic Fathers had not mentioned any miraculous gifts in their circular Epistles to the Churches, you could not have inferred that they possessed none; since neither does he mention them in his circular Epistles, whom you allow to have possessed them.

Of all the Apostles, you can produce but one, St. Paul, who makes mention of these gifts: And that not in his circular Epistles to the Churches; for I know not that he wrote any such.

2. All this time I have been arguing on your own suppositions, that these five apostolic Fathers all wrote circular Epistles to the Churches, and yet never mention these gifts therein. But neither of these suppositions is true. For,

- (1.) Hermas wrote no Epistle at all.
- (2.) Although the rest wrote Epistles to particular Churches, (Clemens to the Corinthians, Ignatius to the Romans, etc.,) yet not one of them wrote any circular Epistle to the Churches, like those of St. James and St. Peter; unless we allow that to be a genuine Epistle, which bears the name of St. Barnabas.
- (3.) You own they all “speak of spiritual gifts, as abounding among the Christians of that age;” but assert, “These cannot mean any thing more than faith, hope, and charity.” (*Ibid.*)

You assert: But the proof, Sir! I want the proof. Though I am but one of the vulgar, yet I am not half so credulous as you apprehend the first Christians to have been. *Ipse dixi* will not satisfy me; I want plain, clear, logical proof; especially when I consider how much you build upon this; that it is the main foundation whereon your hypothesis stands. You yourself must allow, that in the Epistles of St. Paul, **πνευματικά χαρίσματα**, *spiritual gifts*, does always mean more than faith, hope, and charity; that it constantly means miraculous gifts. How then do you prove, that, in the Epistles of St. Ignatius, it means quite another thing? not miraculous gifts, but only the ordinary gifts and graces of the gospel? I thought “the reader” was to “find no evasive distinctions in the following

sheets.” (*Preface*, page 31.) Prove then that this distinction is not evasive; that the same words mean absolutely different things. Till this is clearly and solidly done, reasonable men must believe that this and the like expressions mean the same thing in the writings of the apostolical Fathers as they do in the writings of the Apostles; namely, not the ordinary graces of the gospel, but the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost.

3. You aim indeed at a proof, which would be home to the point, if you were but able to make it out. “These Fathers themselves seem to disclaim all gifts of a more extraordinary kind. Thus Polycarp, in his Epistle to the Philippians, says, ‘Neither I, nor any other such as I am, can come up to the wisdom of the blessed Paul.’ And in the same Epistle he declares, ‘It was not granted to him to practice that, *Be ye angry, and sin not.*’ St. Ignatius also, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, says, ‘These things I prescribe to you, not as if I were somebody extraordinary. For though I am bound for his name, I am not yet perfect in Christ Jesus.’” (Pages 7, 8.) I think verily, these extraordinary proofs may stand without any reply.

4. Yet you courteously add: “If from the passages referred to above, or any other, it should appear probable to any, that they were favored on some occasions with some extraordinary illuminations, visions, or divine impressions, I shall not dispute that point; but; remind them only, that these gifts were granted for their particular comfort; and do not therefore, in any manner, affect or relate to the question now before us.” (Page 10.)

I ask pardon, Sir. These do so deeply affect, so nearly relate to, the question now before us, even as stated by yourself, (*Preface*, page 28,) that in allowing these you give up the substance of the question. You yourself have declared, that one great end of the extraordinary gifts conferred on the Apostles was, “to enable them to bear up against the shocks of popular rage and persecution.” Now were not “extraordinary illuminations, visions, and impressions,” if given at all, given for this very end; “for their particular comfort,” as you now word it? Therefore, in allowing these to the apostolic Fathers, you allow extraordinary gifts which had been formerly granted to the Apostles, to have subsisted in the church after the days of the Apostles, and for the same end as they did before.

5. Therefore the apostolic writers have not left us in the dark, with regard to our present argument; and consequently your triumph comes too soon: “Here then we have an interval of half a century, in which we have the strongest reason to presume that the extraordinary gifts of the apostolic age were withdrawn.” (Page 9.) No; not if all the apostolic Fathers speak of spiritual gifts as abounding among the Christians of that age; not if “extraordinary illuminations, visions, and divine impressions still subsisted among them.” For as to you now putting in, “as exerted openly in the Church for the conviction of unbelievers,” I must desire you to put it out again; it comes a great deal too late. The question between you and me was stated without it, above a hundred pages back. Although, if it be admitted, it will do you no service; seeing your proposition is overthrown, if there were “miraculous gifts after the days of the Apostles,” whether they were “openly exerted for the conviction of unbelievers” or not.

6. I was a little surprised that you should take your leave of the apostolic Fathers so soon. But, upon looking forward, my surprise was at an end: I found you was not guilty of any design to spare them; but only delayed your remarks till the reader should be prepared for what might have shocked him, had it stood in its proper place.

I do not find, indeed, that you make any objection to any part of the Epistles of Ignatius; no, nor of the Catholic Epistle, as it is called, which is inscribed with the name of Barnabas. This clearly convinces me, you have not read it; I am apt to think, not one page of it; seeing, if you had, you would never have let slip such an opportunity of exposing one that was called an apostolic Father.

7. But it would have been strange, if you had not somewhere brought in the famous phoenix of Clemens Romanus. And yet you are very merciful upon that head, barely remarking concerning it, that “he alleged the ridiculous story of the phoenix, as a type and proof of the resurrection. Whether all the heathen writers treat it as nothing else but a mere fable, I know not.” (Page 55.) But that it is so, is certain; and consequently the argument drawn from it is weak and inconclusive. Yet it will not hence

follow, either that Clemens was a wicked man, or that he had none of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

8. There is no real blemish to be found in the whole character of St. Polycarp. But there is one circumstance left upon record concerning him which has the appearance of weakness. And with this you do not fail to acquaint your reader at a convenient season; namely, “that in the most ancient dispute concerning the time of holding Easter, St. Polycarp and Anicetus severally alleged apostolic tradition for their different practice.” (Page 60.) And it is not improbable, that both alleged what was true; that in a point of so little importance the Apostles varied themselves; some of them observing it on the fourteenth day of the moon, and others not. But, be this as it may, it can be no proof, either that Polycarp was not a holy man, or that he was not favored with the extraordinary, as well as ordinary, gifts of the Spirit.

9. With regard to the narrative of his martyrdom, you affirm, “It is one of the most authentic pieces in all primitive antiquity.” (Page 124.) I will not vouch for its authenticity; nor therefore for the story of the dove, the flame forming an arch, the fragrant smell, or the revelation to Pionius. But your attempt to account for these things is truly curious. You say, “An arch of flame round his body is an appearance which might easily happen, from the common effects of wind. And the dove said to fly out of him, might be conveyed into the wood which was prepared to consume him.” (Page 229.) How much more naturally may we account for both, by supposing the whole to be a modern fiction, wrote on occasion of that account mentioned by Eusebius, but lost many ages ago! But whatever may be thought of this account of his death, neither does this affect the question, whether during his life he was endued with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost.

10. There is one of those whom you style apostolic Fathers yet behind, of whom you talk full as familiarly as of the rest: I mean, Hermas: “To whom,” you say, “some impute the fraud of forging the Sibylline books.” (Page 37.) It would not have been amiss, if you had told us, which of the ancients, whether Christian, Jew, or Heathen, ever accused him of this. If none ever did, some will be apt to think it is giving a person but hard

measure, to bring an accusation against him which never was heard of till sixteen hundred years after his death.

But I can the more easily excuse you, because he is a person whom you are wholly unacquainted with; though it is much, curiosity did not lead you, when you had Archbishop Wake's translation in your hand, to read over if it were but half a dozen pages of his famous "Shepherd." But charity obliges me to believe you never did. Otherwise, I cannot conceive you would so peremptorily affirm, of him and the rest together, "There is not the least claim or pretension, in all their several pieces, to any of those extraordinary gifts which are the subject of this inquiry." (Page 3.) I am amazed! Sir, have you never a friend in the world? If you was yourself ignorant of the whole affair, would no one inform you, that all the three books of Hermas, from the first page to the last, are nothing else than a recital of his extraordinary gifts, his visions, prophecies, and revelations?

Can you expect after this, that any man in his senses should take your word for any thing under heaven? that anyone should credit any thing which you affirm? or believe you any farther than he can see you? Jesus, whom you persecute, can forgive you this; but how can you forgive yourself? One would think you should be crying out day and night, "The Shepherd of Hermas will not let me sleep!"

11. You proceed to the testimony of Justin Martyr, who wrote about fifty years after the Apostles: He says, (I translate his words literally,) "There are prophetic gifts among us even until now. You may see with us both women and men having gifts from the Spirit of God." He particularly insists on that of "casting out devils, as what every one might see with his own eyes." (Page 10.)

Irenaeus, who wrote somewhat later, affirms, "that all who were truly disciples of Jesus, wrought miracles in his name: 'Some cast out devils; others had visions, or the knowledge of future events; others healed the sick.' And as to raising the dead, he declares it to have been frequently performed on necessary occasions, by great fasting, and the joint supplication of the Church. 'And we hear many,' says he, 'speaking with

all kinds of tongues, and expounding the mysteries of God.” (Pages 11, 12.)

“Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who lived in the same age, speaks of casting out devils as then common in the Church.” (*Ibid.*)

12. “Tertullian, who flourished toward the end of the second century, challenges the heathen Magistrates, to ‘call before their tribunals any person possessed with a devil. And if the evil spirit, when commanded by any Christian, did not confess himself to be a devil, who elsewhere called himself a God, they should take the life of that Christian.’” (*Ibid.*)

“Minutius Felix, supposed to have wrote in the beginning of the third century, addressing himself to his heathen friend, says, ‘The greatest part of you know what confessions the demons make concerning themselves when we expel them out of the bodies of men.’” (Page 13.)

13. “Origen, something younger than Minutius, declares, that there remained still the manifest indications of the Holy Spirit. ‘For the Christians,’ says he, ‘cast out devils, perform many cures, foretell things to come. And many have been converted to Christianity by visions. I have seen many examples of this sort.’” (Page 14.)

In another place he says, “Signs of the Holy Ghost were shown at the beginning of the teaching of Jesus;” (not, as you translate it, “Miracles began with the preaching of Jesus;” that is quite a different thing;) “more were shown after his ascension, but afterwards fewer. However, even now there are still some remains of them with a few, whose souls are cleansed by the word, and a life conformable to it.” (Page 15.) Again: “Some,” says he, “heal the sick. I myself have seen many so healed, of loss of senses, madness, and innumerable other evils which neither men nor devils can cure.” (*Ibid.*) “And this is done, not by magical arts, but by prayer, and certain plain adjurations, such as any common Christian may use; for generally common men do things of this kind.” (Page 16.)

14. “Cyprian, who wrote about the middle of the third century, says, ‘Beside the visions of the night, even in the day-time, innocent children

among us are filled with the Holy Spirit; and in ecstasies see, and hear, and speak those things by which God is pleased to admonish and instruct us.” (*Ibid.*) Elsewhere he particularly mentions the casting out of devils: “Which,” says he, “either depart immediately, or by degrees, according to the faith of the patient, or the grace of him that works the cure.” (Page 17.)

“Arnobius, who is supposed to have wrote in the year of Christ 303, tells us, ‘Christ appears even now to men unpolled, and eminently holy, who love him; — whose very name puts evil spirits to flight, strikes their prophets dumb, deprives the soothsayers of the power of answering, and frustrates the acts of arrogant magicians.’” (Page 18.)

“Lactantius, who wrote about the same time, speaking of evil spirits, says, ‘Being adjured by Christians, they retire out of the bodies of men, confess themselves to be demons, and tell their names, even the same which are adored in the temples.’” (*Ibid.*)

15. “These,” you say, “are the principal testimonies which assert miraculous gifts through the three first centuries; which might be supported by many more of the same kind, from the same as well as different writers. But none will scruple to risk the fate of the cause upon these.” (Page 19.) Thus far I do not scruple it. I do not doubt but the testimonies of these nine witnesses, added to the evidence of the apostolic Fathers, will satisfy every impartial man with regard to the point in question. Yet I see no cause, if there are nine witnesses more, to give up their evidence; seeing you may possibly raise objections against these which the others are unconcerned in.

If then you should invalidate what I have to reply in behalf of the witnesses now produced, you will have done but half your work. I shall afterwards require a fair hearing for the others also.

16. You close this head with remarking,

- (1.) “That the silence of all the apostolic writers on the subject of these gifts, must dispose us to conclude they were then withdrawn.” (*Ibid.*) O Sir, mention this no more. I intreat you, never name their silence again. They speak loud enough to shame

you as long as you live. You cannot therefore talk with any grace of “the pretended revival of them, after a cessation of forty or fifty years;” or draw conclusions from that which never was.

Your second remark is perfectly new: I dare say, none ever observed before yourself, that this particular circumstance of the primitive Christians “carried with it an air of imposture,” namely, their “challenging all the world to come and see the miracles which they wrought!” (Page 21.) To complete the argument, you should have added, And their staking their lives upon the performance of them.

17. I doubt you have not gone one step forward yet. You have indeed advanced many bold assertions; but you have not fairly proved one single conclusion with regard to the point in hand.

But a natural effect of your lively imagination is, that from this time you argue more and more weakly; inasmuch as, the farther you go, the more things you imagine (and only imagine) yourself to have proved. Consequently, as you gather up more mistakes every step you take, every page is more precarious than the former.

II.

1. The Second thing you proposed was, “to throw together all which those Fathers have delivered concerning the persons said to have been endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.” (*Ibid.*)

“Now, whenever we think or speak with reference,” say you, “of those primitive times, it is always with regard to these very Fathers whose testimonies I have been collecting And they were indeed the chief persons and champions of the Christian cause, the Pastors, Bishops, and Martyrs of the Primitive Church; namely, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Theophilus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius.” Sir, you stumble at the threshold. A common dictionary may inform you that these were not all either Pastors, Bishops, or Martyrs.

2. You go on as you set out: “Yet none of these have any where affirmed, that they themselves were endued with any power of working miracles.”

(Page 22.) You should say, With any of those extraordinary gifts promised by our Lord, and conferred on his Apostles.

No! Have “none of these any where affirmed, that they themselves were endued” with any extraordinary gifts? What think you of the very first of them, Justin Martyr! Either you are quite mistaken in the account you give of him elsewhere, (pages 27, 30,) or he affirmed this of himself over and over. And as to Cyprian, you will by and by spend several pages together (page 101, etc.) on the extraordinary gifts he affirmed himself to be endued with.

But suppose they had not any where affirmed this of themselves, what would you infer therefrom? that they were not endued with any extraordinary gifts? Then, by the very same method of arguing, you might prove that neither St. Peter, nor James, nor John, were endued with any such. For neither do they any where affirm this of themselves in any of the writings which they have left behind them.

3. Your argument concerning the apostolic Fathers is just as conclusive as this. For if you say, “The writers following the apostolic Fathers do not affirm them to have had any miraculous gifts; therefore they had none;” by a parity of reason you must say, “The writers following the Apostles do not affirm them to have had any miraculous gifts; therefore the Apostles had none.”

4. Your next argument against the existence of those gifts is, “that the Fathers do not tell us the names of them which had them.” This is not altogether true. The names of Justin Martyr and Cyprian are pretty well known; as is, among the learned, that of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria. (Pages 106, 212.) But; what, if they did not? Supposing miraculous powers were openly exerted in the Church, and that not only they themselves, but every one else, might see this whenever they pleased; if any Heathen might come and see whenever he pleased, what could a reasonable man desire more? What did it signify to him to know the names of those whom he heard prophesying, or saw working miracles? Though, without doubt, whoever saw the miracles wrought, might easily learn the names of those that wrought them which, nevertheless, the Christians had

no need to publish abroad, to expose them so much the more to the rage and malice of their persecutors.

6. Your third argument is, “The Christian workers of miracles were always charged with imposture by their adversaries. Lucian tells us, ‘Whenever any crafty juggler went to the Christians, he grew rich immediately.’ And Celsus represents the Christian wonder-workers as mere vagabonds and common cheats, who rambled about to fairs and markets.” (Page 23.)

And is it any wonder, that either a Jew or a Heathen should represent them thus? Sir, I do not blame you for not believing the Christian system, but for betraying so gross a partiality; for gleaning up every scrap of heathen scandal, and palming it upon us as unquestionable evidence; and for not translating even these miserable fragments with any accuracy or faithfulness. Instead of giving us the text, bad as it is, you commonly substitute a paraphrase yet worse. And this the unlearned reader naturally supposes to be a faithful translation. It is no credit to your cause, if it needs such supports. And this is no credit to you, if it does not.

To that of Lucian and Celsus, you add the evidence of Caecilius too, who calls, say you, these workers of miracles, “a lurking nation, shunning the light.” Then they were strangely altered all on a sudden; for you told us that, just before, they were proving themselves cheats by a widely different method, — by “calling out both upon Magistrates and people, and challenging all the world to come and see what they did!” (Page 20.)

I was not aware that you had begun “to throw together all which the Fathers have delivered, concerning the persons said to have been endued with those extraordinary gifts.” And it seems you have made an end of it! And accordingly you proceed to sum up the evidence; to “observe, upon the whole, from these characters of the primitive wonder-workers, as given both by friends and enemies, we may fairly conclude that the gifts of those ages were generally engrossed by private Christians, who travelled about from city to city to assist the ordinary preachers, in the conversion of Pagans, by the extraordinary miracles they pretended to perform.” (Page 24.)

Characters given both by friends and enemies! Pray, Sir, what friends have you cited for this character? or what enemies, except only Celsus the Jew? (And you are a miserable interpreter for him.) So, from the single testimony of such a witness, you lay it down as an oracular truth, that all the miracle-workers of the first three ages were “mere vagabonds and common cheats,” rambling about from city to city, to assist in converting Heathens, by tricks and imposture! And this you ingeniously call, “throwing together all which the Fathers have delivered concerning them!”

9. But, to complete all, “Here again,” you say, “we see a dispensation of things ascribed to God, quite different from that which we meet with in the New Testament.” (Page 24.) *We see a dispensation!* Where? Not in the primitive Church; not in the writings of one single Christian; not of one Heathen; and only of one Jew; for poor Celsus had not a second; though he multiplies, under your forming hand, into a cloud of witnesses. He alone ascribes this to the ancient Christians, which you in their name ascribe to God. With the same regard to truth you go on: “In those days the power of working miracles” (you should say, the extraordinary gifts) “was committed to none but those who presided in the Church of Christ.” *Iipse dixit* for that. But I cannot take your word; especially when the Apostles and Evangelists say otherwise. “But, upon the pretended revival of those powers,” — Sir, we do not pretend the revival of them; seeing we shall believe they never were intermitted, till you can prove the contrary, — “we find the administration of them committed, not to those who had the government of the Church, not to the Bishops, the Martyrs, or the principal champions of the Christian cause, but to boys, to women, and, above all, to private and obscure laymen; not only of an inferior, but sometimes also of a bad, character.”

Surely, Sir, you talk in your sleep: You could never talk thus, if you had your eyes open, and your understanding about you. “We find the administration of them committed, not to those who had the government of the Church.” No! I thought Cyprian had had the government of the Church at Carthage, and Dionysius at Alexandria! “Not to the Bishops.” Who were these then that were mentioned last? Bishops, or no Bishops? “Not to the Martyrs.” Well, if Cyprian was neither Bishop nor Martyr, I hope you will allow Justin’s claim. “Not to the principal champions of the

Christian cause.” And yet you told us, not three pages since, that “these very Fathers were the chief champions of the Christian cause in those days!” — “But to boys, and to women.” I answer: “This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel, It shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit, saith the Lord, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy!” — a circumstance which turns this argument full against; you, till you openly avow you do not believe those prophecies. “And, above all, to private and obscure laymen, not only of an inferior, but sometimes of a bad, character.” I answer,

(1.) You cite only one Ante-Nicene writer, to prove them committed to “private and obscure laymen.” And he says this and no more: “Generally private men do things of this kind.”³ By what rule of grammar you construe *ιδιωται*, *private and obscure laymen*, I know not.

(2.) To prove these were sometimes men of a bad character, you quote also but one Ante-Nicene Father; (for I presume you will not assert the genuineness of the, so called, “Apostolical Constitutions;”) and that one is, in effect, none at all: It is Tertullian, who, in his “Prescription against Heretics,” says, “They will add many things of the authority” (or power) “of every heretical teacher; that they raised the dead, healed the sick, foretold things to come.”⁴ *They will add!* But did Tertullian believe them? There is no shadow of reason to think he did. And if not, what is all this to the purpose? No more than the tales of later ages which you add, concerning the miracles wrought by bones and relics.

10. “These things,” you add, “are so strange, as to give just reason to suspect that there was some original fraud in the case, and that those strolling wonder-workers, by a dexterity of juggling, imposed upon the pious Fathers, whose strong prejudices, and ardent zeal for the interest of Christianity, would dispose them to embrace, without examination, whatever seemed to promote so good a cause.” (Page 25.) You now speak tolerably plain, and would be much disappointed if those who have no “strong prejudices for Christianity” did not apply what you say of these “strolling wonder-workers” to the Apostles, as well as their successors.

11. A very short answer will suffice: “These things are so strange.” They are more strange than true. You have not proved one jot or tittle of them yet. Therefore, the consequences you draw must fall to the ground till you find them some better support.

12. Nay, but “it is certain and notorious,” you say, “that this was really the case in some instances;” that is, that “strolling, juggling wonder-workers imposed upon the pious Fathers.” (Page 26.) Sir, I roust come in again with my cuckoo’s note, — The proof! Where is the proof! Till this is produced I cannot allow that “this is certain and notorious,” ever in one individual instance.

13. Let us now stand still, and observe what it is you have made out, under this Second head. What you proposed was, “to throw together all which the primitive Fathers had delivered concerning the persons said to be then endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.” And how have you executed what you proposed? You have thrown together a quotation from a Jew, two from Heathens, three quarters of a line from Origen, and three lines from Tertullian! Nothing at all, it is true, to the point in question. But that you could not help.

14. And this, it seems, is “all you have been able to draw from any of the primitive writers, concerning the persons who were endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost!” (Page 21.)

Permit me, Sir, to apply to you what was spoken on another occasion: “Sir, the well is deep, and thou hast nothing to draw with;” neither sufficient skill, nor industry and application. Besides, you are resolved to draw out of the well what was never in it, and must, of course, lose all your labor.

III.

1. You are, “Thirdly, to show the particular characters and opinions of those Fathers who attest these gifts.”

Suffer me to remind you that you mentioned nine of these, Justin, Irenaeus, Theophilus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius. You are therefore now to show what were “the particular characters and opinions of these Fathers.”

Indeed, I should think their opinions had small relation to the question. But, since you think otherwise, I am prepared to hear you.

You premise, “that an unexceptionable witness must have” (page 26) both judgment and honesty; and then, passing over the apostolic Fathers, as supposing them on your side, endeavor to show that these other Fathers had neither.

2. You begin with Justin Martyr, who, you say, “frequently affirms, that the miraculous gift of expounding the Holy Scriptures, or the mysteries of God, was granted to himself, by the special grace of God.” (Page 27.) Upon which I observe,

- (1.) It has not yet been agreed among learned men, that declaring “the mysteries of God” is the same thing with “expounding the Holy Scriptures.”
- (2.) It is not clear that Justin does affirm his being endued either with one or the other; at least, not from the passages which you cite. The first, literally translated, runs thus: “He hath revealed to us whatso ever things we have understood by his grace from the Scriptures also.”⁵ The other: “I have not any such power; but God has given me the grace to understand his Scriptures.”⁶ Now, Sir, by which of these does it appear that Justin affirms he had the miraculous gift of expounding the Scriptures?

3. However, you will affirm it, were it only to have the pleasure of confuting it. In order to which, you recite three passages from his writings, wherein he interprets Scripture weakly enough; and then add, after a strained compliment to Dr. Grabe, and a mangled translation of one of his remarks: “His Works are but little else than a wretched collection of interpretations of the same kind. Yet this pious Father insists that they

were all suggested to him from heaven.” (Page 30.) No; neither the one nor the other. Neither do interpretations of Scripture (good or bad) make the tenth part of his writings; nor does he insist that all those which are found therein were suggested to him from heaven. This does not follow from any passage you have cited yet; nor from his saying, in a particular case, “Do you think I could have understood these things in the Scriptures, if I had not, by the will of God, received the grace to understand them?”

4. However, now you clap your wings. “What credit,” say you, “can be due to this Father, in the report of other people’s gifts, who was so grossly deceived, or willing, at least, to deceive others, in this confident attestation of his own?” (*Ibid.*) The answer is plain and obvious. It is not clear that he attests his own at all. Consequently, as yet his credit is unblemished.

“But he did not understand Hebrew, and gave a wrong derivation of the Hebrew word, *Satan*.” Allowing this, that he was no good etymologist, his credit as a witness may be as good as ever.

5. But, to blast his credit forever, you will now reckon up all the heresies which he held. And, First: “He believed the doctrine of the Millennium; or, ‘that all the saints should be raised in the flesh, and reign with Christ, in the enjoyment of all sensual pleasures, for a thousand years before the general resurrection.’” (Page 31.) These you mark as though they were Justin’s words. I take knowledge you hold, no faith is to be kept with heretics; and that all means are fair which conduce to so good an end as driving the Christian heresy out of the world.

It is by this principle only that I can account for your adding: “Which doctrine” (that of their enjoying all sensual pleasures) “he deduces from the testimony of the Prophets, and of St. John the Apostle; and was followed in it by the Fathers of the second and third centuries.”

The doctrine (as you very well know) which Justin deduced from the Prophets and the Apostles, and in which he was undoubtedly followed by the Fathers of the second and third centuries, is this: —

The souls of them who have been martyred for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and who have not worshipped the beast, neither received his mark, shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

But the rest of the dead shall not live again, until the thousand years are finished.

Now, to say they believed this, is neither more nor less than to say, they believed the Bible.

6. The second heresy you charge him with is the believing, “that those ‘sons of God’ mentioned Genesis 4:4, of whom it is there said, ‘They came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them,’ were evil angels.” (Page 32.) And I allow, he too lightly received this on the testimony of the Jewish Commentators. But this only proves that he was a fallible man; not that he was a knave, or that he had not eyes and ears.

7. You charge him, Thirdly, “with treating the spurious books, published under the names of the *Sibyl* and *Hystaspes*, with the same reverence as the prophetic Scriptures.” (Page 33.) His words are: “By the power of evil spirits, it was made death to read the books of Hystaspes, or of the Sibyl, or of the Prophets.” Well; how does this prove that he treated those books with the same reverence as the prophetic Scriptures?

“But it is certain,” you say, “that, from this example and authority of Justin, they were held in the highest veneration by the Fathers and Rulers of the Church, through all succeeding ages.” (*Ibid.*)

I do not conceive it is certain. I wait your proof, first, of the fact; next, of the reason you assign for it. The fact itself, that “these books were held in the highest veneration by the Fathers and Rulers through all succeeding ages,” is in nowise proved by that single quotation from Clemens Alexandrinus, wherein he urges the Heathens with the testimonies of their own authors, of the Sibyl, and of Hystaspes. (Page 34.) We cannot infer from hence that he himself held them “in the highest veneration;” much less that all the Fathers did. And as to the reason you assign for that

veneration, — the example and authority of Justin, — you cite no writer of any kind, good or bad. So he that will believe it, may.

But some, you tell us, “impute the forging these books to Justin.” Be pleased to tell us, likewise, who those are; and what grounds they allege for that imputation. Till then, it can be of no signification.

8. You charge him, Fourthly, “with believing that silly story concerning the Septuagint version of the Old Testament; with saying, that he himself, when at Alexandria, saw the remains of the cells in which the translators were shut up; and with making a considerable mistake in the chronology relating thereto.” (Page 37.) And if all this be allowed, and, over and above, that he “frequently cites apocryphal books, and cites the Scriptures by memory;” what have you gained toward the proof of your grand conclusion, that “he was either too great a fool, or too great a knave, to be believed touching a plain matter of fact?”

9. You seem sensible of this, and therefore add, Fifthly: “It will be said, perhaps, that these instances show a weakness of judgment, but do not touch the credit of Justin as a witness of fact.” (Page 29.) But can you scrape up nothing from all the dunghills of antiquity that does? I dare say, you will do your utmost. And, first, you reply, “The want of judgment alone may, in some cases, disqualify a man from being a good witness. Thus, Justin himself was imposed upon by those of Alexandria, who showed him some old ruins under the name of cells. And so he was by those who told him, there was a statue at Rome, inscribed, *Simoni Deo Sancto*; whereas it was really inscribed, *Semoni Sanco Deo*; to an old deity of the Sabines. Now,” say you, “if he was deceived in such obvious facts, how much more easily would he be deceived by subtle and crafty impostors!” (Pages 40, 41.) Far less easily. A man of good judgment may be deceived in the inscriptions of statues, and points of ancient history. But, if he has only eyes and ears, and a small degree of common sense, he cannot be deceived in facts where he is both an eye and ear witness.

10. For a parting blow, you endeavor to prove, Sixthly, that Justin was a knave, as well as a fool. To this end you remark, that “he charges the Jews with erasing three passages out of the Greek Bible; one whereof stands

there still, and the other two were not expunged by some Jew, but added by some Christian. Nay, that able critic and Divine, John Croius,” (you know when to bestow honorable appellations,) “says Justin forged and published this passage for the confirmation of the Christian doctrine., as well as the greatest part of the Sibylline oracles, and the sentences of Mercurius.” (Page 42.)

With far greater probability than John Croius asserts that Justin forged these passages, a man of candor would hope that he read them in his copy (though incorrect) of the Greek Bible. And till you disprove this, or prove the assertion of Croius, you are got not a jot farther still. But, notwithstanding you have taken true pains to blacken him, both with regard to his morals and understanding, he may still be an honest man, and an unexceptionable witness, as to plain facts done before his race.

11. You fall upon Irenaeus next, and carefully enumerate all the mistakes in his writings. As, First, that he held the doctrine of the millennium, and related a weak fancy of Papias concerning it. Secondly: That he believed our Savior to have lived fifty years. Thirdly: That he believed Enoch and Elias were translated, and St. Paul caught up to that very paradise from which Adam was expelled. (So he might, and all the later Fathers with him, without being either the better or the worse.) Fourthly: That he believed the story concerning the Septuagint Version; nay, and that the Scriptures were destroyed in the Babylonish captivity, but restored again after seventy years by Esdras, inspired for that purpose. “In this also” (you say, but do not prove) “he was followed by all the principal Fathers that succeeded him; although there is no better foundation for it, than that fabulous relation in the Second Book of Esdras.” You add, Fifthly, that “he believed the sons of God who came in to the daughters of men were evil angels.” And all the early Fathers, you are very ready to believe, “were drawn into the same error, by the authority of the apocryphal Book of Enoch, cited by St. Jude.” (Page 44.)

12. It is not only out of your goodwill to St. Jude, or Irenaeus, you gather up these fragments of error, that nothing be lost, but also to the whole body of the ancient Christians. For “all those absurdities,” you say, “were taught by the Fathers of those ages,” (naturally implying, by all the

Fathers,) “as doctrines of the universal Church, derived immediately from the Apostles; and thought so necessary, that those who held the contrary were hardly considered as real Christians.” Here I must beg you to prove as well as assert,

- (1.) That all these absurdities of the millennium in the grossest sense of it, of the age of Christ, of paradise, of the destruction of the Scriptures, of the Septuagint Version, and of evil angels mixing with women, were taught by all the Fathers of those ages:
- (2.) That all those Fathers taught these as doctrines of the universal Church, derived immediately from the Apostles: And,
- (3.) That they all denied those to be real Christians who held the contrary.

13. You next cite two far-fetched interpretations of Scripture, and a weak saying out of the writings of Irenaeus. But all three prove no more, than that in these instances he did not speak with strictness of judgment; not, that he was incapable of knowing what he saw with his own eyes, or of truly relating it to others.

Before we proceed to what with equal good humor and impartiality you remark concerning the rest of these Fathers, it will be proper to consider what more is interspersed concerning these in the sequel of this argument.

14. And, First, you say, “Justin used an inconclusive argument for the existence of the souls of men after death.” (Page 67.) It is possible he might; but whether it was conclusive or no, this does not affect his moral character.

You say, Secondly, “It was the common opinion of all the Fathers, taken from the authority of Justin Martyr, that the demons wanted the fumes of the sacrifices to strengthen them for the enjoyment of their lustful pleasures.” (Page 69.)

Sir, no man of reason will believe this, concerning one of the Fathers, upon your bare assertion. I must therefore desire you to prove by more than a scrap of a sentence,

- (1.) That Justin himself held this opinion:
- (2.) That he invented it:
- (3.) That it was the common opinion of all the Fathers: And,
- (4.) That they all took it on his authority.

15. You affirm, Thirdly: “He says, that all devils yield and submit to the name of Jesus; as also to the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” (Page 85.) Very likely he may.

Lastly. You cite a passage from him, concerning the Spirit of God influencing the minds of holy men. But neither does this in any measure affect his credit as a witness of fact. Consequently, after all that you have been able to draw, either from himself, or any of the primitive writers, here is one witness of unquestionable credit, touching the miracles wrought in the primitive Church, touching the subsistence of the extraordinary gifts after the days of the Apostles.

16. But let us come once more to Irenaeus; for you have not done with him yet: “Forgery,” you say, “has been actually charged upon Justin,” (by John Croius and Dr. Middleton,) “and may with equal reason be charged on Irenaeus. For what other account can be given of his frequent appeals to apostolical tradition, for the support of so many incredible doctrines” (Page 111.) Why, this very natural one, that in non-essential points he too easily followed the authority of Papias, a weak man, who on slight grounds believed many trifling things to have been said or done by the Apostles. And allowing all this, yet it does not give us so “lamentable an idea of those primitive ages and primitive champions of the Christian cause.” (Page 59.)

The same account may be given of his mistake concerning the age of our Lord. (*Ibid.*) There is therefore, as yet, neither reason nor any plausible pretense for laying forgery to his charge. And consequently, thus far his credit as a witness stands clear and unimpeached.

But you say, Secondly, “He was a zealous asserter of tradition.” (Page 61.) He might be so, and yet be an honest man; and that, whether he was

mistaken or no, in supposing Papias to have been a disciple of John the Apostle. (Page 64.)

You say, Thirdly, He supposed; “that the disciples of Simon Magus, as well as Carpocrates, used magical arts;” (page 68;) that “the dead were frequently raised in his time;” (page 72;) that “the Jews, by the name of God, cast out devils;” (page 80;) and that “many had even then the gift of tongues, although he had it not himself.” This is the whole of your charge against St. Irenaeus, when summed up and laid together. And now, let any reasonable person judge, whether all this gives us the least cause to question, either his having sense enough to discern a plain matter of fact, or honesty enough to relate it. Here then is one more credible witness of miraculous gifts after the days of the Apostles.

18. What you advance concerning the history of tradition, I am neither concerned to defend nor to confute. Only I must observe, you forget yourself again, where you say, “The fable of the millennium, of the old age of Christ, with many more, were all embraced by the earliest Fathers.” (Page 64.) For modesty’s sake, Sir, think a little before you speak; and remember you yourself informed us, that one of these was never embraced at all, but by one single Father only.

19. “I cannot,” you say, “dismiss this article, without taking notice, that witchcraft was universally believed through all ages of the primitive Church.” (Page 66.) This you show by citations from several of the Fathers; who likewise believed, as you inform us, that “evil spirits, had power frequently to affect either the bodies or minds of men;” that they “acted the parts of the heathen gods, and assumed the forms of those who were called from the dead. Now, this opinion,” say you, “is not only a proof of the grossest credulity, but of that species of it which, of all others, lays a man most open to imposture.” (Page 70.)

And yet this opinion, as you know full well, has its foundation, not only in the histories of all ages, and all nations throughout the habitable world, even where Christianity never obtained; but particularly in Scripture; in abundance of passages both of the Old and New Testament; as where the Israelites were expressly commanded not to “suffer a witch to live;”

(*Ibid.*;) where St. Paul numbers “witchcraft” with “the works of the flesh,” (Galatians 5:19, 20,) and ranks it with adultery and idolatry; and where St. John declares, “Without are sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers.” (Revelations 22:15.)

That the gods of the Heathens are devils, (1 Corinthians 10:20,) is declared in terms, by one of those who are styled inspired writers. And many conceive, that another of them gives us a plain instance of their “assuming the form of those who were called from the dead.” (1 Samuel 28:13, 14.)

Of the power of evil spirits to afflict the minds of men, none can doubt, who believe there are any such beings. And of their power to afflict the body, we have abundant proof, both in the history of Job, and that of the gospel demoniacs.

I do not mean, Sir, to accuse you of believing these things. You have shown that you are guiltless in this matter; and that you pay no more regard to that antiquated book, the Bible, than you do to the Second Book of Esdras. But, alas! the Fathers were not so far enlightened. And because they were bigoted to that old book, they of consequence held for truth what, you assure us, was mere delusion and imposture.

20. Now to apply: “A mind,” you say, “so totally possessed by superstitious fancies, could not even suspect the pretensions of those vagrant jugglers, who in those primitive ages were so numerous, and so industriously employed in deluding their fellow-creatures. Both Heathens, Jews, and Christians are all allowed to have had such impostors among them.” (Page 71.) By whom, Sir, is this allowed of the Christians? By whom, but Celsus, was it affirmed of them? Who informed you of their growing so numerous, and using such industry in their employment? To speak the plain truth, your mind appears to be “so totally possessed by” these “vagrant jugglers,” that you cannot say one word about the primitive Church, but they immediately start up before you; though there is no more proof of their ever existing, than of a witch’s sailing in an eggshell.

21. You conclude this head: “When pious Christians are arrived to this pitch of credulity, as to believe that evil spirits or evil men can work

miracles, in opposition to the gospel; their very piety will oblige them to admit as miraculous whatever is pretended to be wrought in defence of it.” (*Ibid.*) Once more you have spoken out; you have shown, without disguise, what you think of St. Paul, and the “lying miracles” (2 Thessalonians 2:9) which he (poor man!) believed evil spirits or evil men could work in opposition to the gospel; and of St. John, talking so idly of him who “doeth great wonders, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth” (even though they were not Christians) “by means of those miracles which he hath power to do.” (Revelations 13:13, 14.)

22. You have now finished the third thing you proposed; which was, “to show the particular characters of the several Fathers, who attest” that they were eye and ear witnesses of the extraordinary gifts in the primitive Church.

You named nine of these: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Theophilus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius; at the same time observing, that many other writers attest the same thing.

But let the others stand by. Are these good men and true? That is the present question.

You say, “No;” and to prove that these nine are knaves, bring several charges against two of them.

These have been answered at large: Some of them proved to be false; some, though true, yet not invalidating their evidence.

But supposing we wave the evidence of these two, here are seven more still to come.

O, but you say, “If there were twice seven, they only repeat the words which these have taught them.”

You say; but how often must you be reminded, that saying and proving are two things? I grant, in three or four opinions, some (though not all) of these were mistaken, as well as those two. But this by no means proves

that they were all knaves together; or that if Justin Martyr or Irenaeus speaks wrong, I am therefore to give no credit to the evidence of Theophilus or Minutius Felix.

23. You have therefore made a more lame piece of work on this head, if possible, than on the preceding. You have promised great things, and performed just nothing. You have left above three parts in four of your work entirely untouched; as these two are not a fourth part even of the writers you have named, as attesting the continuance of the “extraordinary gifts” after the age of the Apostles.

But you have taught that trick at least to your “vagrant jugglers,” to supply the defect of all other arguments. At every dead lift you are sure to play upon us these dear creatures of your own imagination. They are the very strength of your battle, your tenth legion. Yet if a man impertinently calls for proof of their existence, if he comes close and engages them hand to hand, they immediately vanish away.

IV.

You are, in the Fourth place, to “review all the several kinds of miraculous gifts which are pretended to have been given; and to observe, from the nature of each, how far they may reasonably be suspected.” (Page 72.)

“These,” you say, “are,

1. The power of raising the dead.
2. Of healing the sick.
3. Of casting out devils.
4. Of prophesying.
5. Of seeing visions.
6. Of discovering the secrets of men.
7. Of expounding the Scriptures.
8. Of speaking with tongues.”

I had rather have had an account of the miraculous powers as they are represented to us in the history of the gospel. But that account you are not inclined to give. So we will make the best of what we have.

Section I.

1. And, First, as to “raising the dead.” Irenaeus affirms: “This was frequently performed on necessary occasions; when by great fastings and the joint supplication of the Church, the spirit of the dead person returned into him, and the man was given back to the prayers of the saints.” (*Ibid.*)

2. But you object: “There is not an instance of this to be found in the three first centuries.” (*Ibid.*) I presume you mean, no heathen historian has mentioned it; for Christian historians were not. I answer,

- (1.) It is not probable a heathen historian would have related such a fact, had he known it.
- (2.) It is equally improbable, he should know it; seeing the Christians knew with whom they had to do; and that, had such an instance been made public, they would not long have enjoyed him who had been given back to their prayers. They could not but remember what had been before, when the Jews sought Lazarus also to kill him; a very obvious reason why a miracle of this particular kind ought not to have been published abroad; especially considering, Thirdly, that it was not designed for the conversion of the Heathens; but “on occasions necessary” for the good of the Church, of the Christian community. Lastly: It was a miracle proper, above all others, to support and confirm the Christians, who were daily tortured and slain, but sustained by the hope of obtaining a better resurrection.

3. You object, Secondly: “The Heathens constantly affirmed the thing itself to be impossible.” (Page 73.) They did so. But is it “a thing incredible with *you*, that God should raise the dead?”

4. You object, Thirdly, that when “Autolycus, an eminent Heathen, scarce forty years after this, said to Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, ‘Show me but one raised from the dead, that I may see and believe;’ (*Ibid.*;) Theophilus could not.” Supposing he could not, I do not see that this contradicts the testimony of Irenaeus; for he does not affirm, (though you say he does,) that this was “performed, as it were, in every parish, or place where there was a Christian Church.” (Page 72.) He does not affirm,

that it was performed at Antioch; probably, not in any Church, unless where a concurrence of important circumstances required it. Much less does he affirm, that the persons raised in France would be alive forty years after. Therefore, although it be granted,

- (1.) That the historians of that age are silent;
- (2.) That the Heathens said, the thing was impossible; and,
- (3.) That Theophilus did not answer the challenge of the Heathen, Autolycus; — all this will not invalidate, in any degree, the express testimony of Irenaeus, or prove that none have been raised from the dead since the days of the Apostles.

Section II.

1. “The next gift is, that of healing the sick; often performed by anointing them with oil; in favor of which,” as you observe, “the ancient testimonies are more full and express.” (Page 75.) But “this,” you say, “might be accounted for without a miracle, by the natural efficacy of the oil itself.” (Page 76.) I doubt not. Be pleased to try how many you can cure thus, that are blind, deaf, dumb, or paralytic; and experience, if not philosophy, will teach you, that oil has no such natural efficacy as this.

2. Of this you seem not insensible already, and therefore fly away to your favorite supposition, that “they were not cured at all; that the whole matter was a cheat from the beginning to the end.” But by what arguments do you evince this? The first; is, “The Heathens pretended to do the same.” Nay, and “managed the imposture with so much art, that the Christians could neither deny nor detect it; but insisted always that it was performed by demons, or evil spirits.” (*Ibid.*) But still the Heathens maintained, “the cures were wrought by their gods by AEsculapius in particular.” And where is the difference? seeing, as was observed before, “the gods of the Heathens were but devils.”

3. But you say, “Although public monuments were erected in proof and memory of these cures, at the time when they were performed, yet it is certain all those heathen miracles were pure forgeries.” (Page 79.) How is it certain? If you can swallow this without good proof, you are far more credulous than I. I cannot believe that the whole body of the Heathens, for so many generations, were utterly destitute of common sense, any more

than of common honesty. Why should you fix such a charge on whole cities and countries? You could have done no more, if they had been Christians!

4. But “diseases, though fatal and desperate, are oft surprisingly healed of themselves.” And therefore “we cannot pay any great regard to such stories, unless we knew more precisely in this case the real bounds between nature and miracle.” (*Ibid.*) Sir, I understand you well. The drift of the argument is easily seen. It points at the Master, as well as His servants; and tends to prove that, after all this talk about miraculous cures, we are not sure there were ever any in the world. But it will do no harm. For, although we grant,

- (1.) That some recover, even in seemingly desperate cases; and,
- (2.) That we do not know, in any case, the precise bounds between nature and miracle; yet it does not follow, Therefore I cannot be assured there ever was a miracle of healing in the world. To explain this by instance: I do not precisely know how far nature may go in healing, that is, restoring sight to, the blind; yet this I assuredly know, that if a man born blind is restored to sight by a word, this is not nature, but miracle. And to such a story, well attested, all reasonable men will pay the highest regard.

5. The sum of what you have advanced on this head, is,

- (1.) That the Heathens themselves had miraculous cures among them.
- (2.) That oil may cure some diseases by its natural efficacy. And,
- (3.) That we do not know the precise bounds of nature. All this I allow. But all this will not prove that no miraculous cures were performed, either by our Lord and his Apostles, or by those who lived in the three succeeding centuries.

Section III.

1. The Third of the miraculous powers said to have been in the primitive Church, is that of casting out devils. The testimonies concerning this are out of number, and as plain as words can make them. To show, therefore, that all these signify nothing, and that there were never any devils cast out at all, neither by the Apostles, nor since the Apostles, (for the argument

proves both or neither,) is a task worthy of you. And, to give you your just praise, you have here put forth all your strength.

2. And yet I cannot but apprehend, there was a much shorter way. Would it not have been readier to overthrow all those testimonies at a stroke, by proving, there never was any devil in the world? Then the whole affair of casting him out had been at an end.

But it is in condescension to the weakness and prejudices of mankind that you go less out of the common road, and only observe, “that those who were said to be possessed of the devil, may have been ill of the falling sickness.” And their symptoms, you say, “seem to be nothing else but the ordinary symptoms of an epilepsy.” (Page 81.)

If it be asked, But were “the speeches and confessions of the devils, and their answering to all questions, nothing but the ordinary symptoms of an epilepsy?” you take in a second hypothesis, and account for these “by the arts of imposture, and contrivance between the persons concerned in the act.” (Page 82.)

But is not this something extraordinary, that men in epileptic fits should be capable of so much art and contrivance? To get over this difficulty, we are apt to suppose that art and contrivance were the main ingredients; so that we are to add only *quantum sufficit* of the epilepsy, and sometimes to leave it out of the composition.

But the proof, Sir? where is the proof? I want a little of that too. Instead of this, we have only another supposition: “That all the Fathers were either induced by their prejudices to give too hasty credit to these pretended possessions, or carried away by their zeal to support a delusion which was useful to the Christian cause.” (*Ibid.*)

I grant they were prejudiced in favor of the Bible; but yet we cannot fairly conclude from hence, either that they were one and all continually deceived by merely pretended possessions; or that they would all lie for God, — a thing absolutely forbidden in that book.

3. But “leaders of sects,” you say, “whatever principles they pretend to, have seldom scrupled to use a commodious lie.” (Page 83.) I observe you are quite impartial here. You make no exception of age or nation. It is all one to you whether your reader applies this to the son of Abdallah, or the Son of Mary. And yet, Sir, I cannot but think there was a difference. I fancy the Jew was an honester man than the Arabian; and though Mahomet used many a commodious lie, yet Jesus of Nazareth did not.

4. However, “Not one of these Fathers made any scruple of using the hyperbolical style,” (that is, in plain English, of lying,) “as an eminent writer of ecclesiastical history declares.” (*Ibid.*) You should have said, an impartial writer. For who would scruple that character to Mr. Le Clerc? And yet I cannot take either his or your bare word for this. Be pleased to produce a little proof. Hitherto you have proved absolutely nothing on the head; but, as your manner is, taken all for granted.

5. You next relate that famous story from Tertullian: “A woman went to the theater, and returned possessed with a devil. When the unclean spirit was asked how he dared to assault a Christian, he answered, ‘I found her on my own ground.’” (*Ibid.*) After relating another, which you endeavor to account for naturally, you intimate that this was a mere lie of Tertullian’s. But how is that proved? Why, “Tertullian was an utter enemy to plays and public shows in the theatre.” He was so: But can we infer from thence that he was an utter enemy to common honesty?

6. You add: “The Fathers themselves own that even the Jews, yea, and the Heathens, cast out devils. Now, it will be granted, that these Jewish and Heathen exorcists were mere cheats and impostors. But the Fathers believed they really cast them out. Now, if they could take their tricks for the effects of a supernatural power, well might they be deceived by their own impostors. Or they might think it convenient to oppose one cheat to another.” (Pages 84, 87, 88.)

Deceived, say you, *by their own impostors*? Why, I thought they were the very men who set them to work! who opposed one cheat to another! Apt scholars, who acted their part so well, as even to deceive their masters! But, whatever the Heathen were, we cannot grant that all the “Jewish

exorcists were impostors.” Whether the Heathens cast out devils or not, it is sure the sons of the Jews cast them out. I mean, upon supposition, that Jesus of Nazareth cast them out; which is a point not here to be disputed.

7. But “it is very hard to believe what Origen declares, that the devils used to possess and destroy cattle.” You might have said, what Matthew and Mark declare concerning the herd of swine; and yet we shall find you, by and by, believing far harder things than this.

Before you subjoined the silly story of Hilarion and his camel, you should, in candor, have informed your reader, that it is disputed, whether the life of Hilarion was wrote by St. Jerome or no. But, be it as it may, I have no concern for either: For they did not live within the three first ages.

8. I know not what you have proved hitherto, though you have affirmed many things, and intimated more. But now we come to the strength of the cause, contained in your five observations.

You observe, First, “that all the primitive accounts of casting out devils, though given by different Fathers, and in different ages, yet exactly agree with regard to all the main circumstances.” (Page 91.) And this you apprehend to be a mark of imposture. “It looks,” you say, “as if they copied from each other!” Now, a vulgar reader would have imagined that any single account of this kind must be rendered much rare (not less) credible, by parallel accounts of what many had severally seen, at different times, and in different places.

9. You observe, Secondly, “that the persons thus possessed were called *εγγαστριμθοι*, ‘ventriloquists;’” (some of them were;) “because they were generally believed to speak out of the belly. Now, there are, at this day,” you say, “those who, by art and practice, can speak in the same manner. If we suppose, then, that there were artists of this kind among the ancient Christians, how easily, by a correspondence between the ventriloquist and the exorcist, might they delude the most sensible of their audience!” (Page 92.)

But what did the ventriloquist do with his epilepsy in the meantime? You must not let it go, because many of the circumstances wherein all these accounts agree cannot be tolerably accounted for without it. And yet, how will you make these two agree? It is a point worthy your serious consideration.

But cheats, doubtless, they were, account for it who can. Yet it is strange none of the Heathens should find them out; that the imposture should remain quite undiscovered till fourteen hundred years after the impostors were dead! He must have a very large faith who can believe this; who can suppose that not one of all those impostors should, either through inadvertence, or in the midst of tortures and death, have once intimated any such thing.

10. You observe, Thirdly, “that many demoniacs could not be cured by all the power of the exorcists; and that the cures which were pretended to be wrought on any were but temporary, were but the cessation of a particular fit or access of the distemper. This,” you say, “is evident from the testimony of antiquity itself, and may be clearly collected from the method of treating them in the ancient Church.” (*Ibid.*)

Sir, you are the most obliging disputant in the world: For you continually answer your own arguments. Your last observation confuted all that you had advanced before. And now you are so kind as to confute that. For if, after all, these demoniacs were real epileptics, and that in so high a degree as to be wholly incurable, what becomes of their art and practice, and of the very good correspondence between the ventriloquist and the exorcist?

Having allowed you your supposition just so long as may suffice to confute yourself, I must now observe, it is not true. For all that is evident from the testimony of antiquity, is this: That although many demoniacs were wholly delivered, yet some were not, even in the third century; but continued months or years, with only intervals of ease, before they were entirely set at liberty.

11. You observe, Fourthly, “that great numbers of demoniacs subsisted in those early ages, whose chief habitation was in a part of the church, where,

as in a kind of hospital, they were under the care of the exorcists; which will account for the confidence of those challenges made to the Heathens by the Christians, to come and see how they could drive the devils out of them, while they kept such numbers of them in constant pay; always ready for the show; tried and disciplined by your exorcists to groan and howl, and give proper answers to all questions.” (Pages 94, 95.)

So now the correspondence between the ventriloquist and the exorcist is grown more close than ever! But the misfortune is, this observation, likewise, wholly overthrows that which went before it. For if all the groaning and howling, and other symptoms, were no more than what they “were disciplined to by their exorcists;” (page 95;) then it cannot be, that “many of them could not possibly be cured by all the power of those exorcists!” (Page 92.) What! could they not possibly be taught to know their masters; and when to end, as well as to begin, the show? One would think that the cures wrought upon these might have been more than temporary. Nay, it is surprising, that, while they had such numbers of them, they should ever suffer the same person to show twice.

12. You observe, Fifthly, “that, whereas this power of casting out devils had hitherto been in the hands only of the meaner part of the laity;” (that wants proof;) “it was, about the year 367, put under the direction of the Clergy; it being then decreed by the Council of Laodicea, that none should be exorcists but those appointed (or ordained) by the Bishop. But no sooner was this done, even by those who favored and desired to support it, than the gift itself gradually decreased and expired.” (Page 95.)

You here overthrow, not only your immediately preceding observation, (as unusual,) but likewise what you have observed elsewhere, — that the exorcists began to be ordained “about the middle of the third century.” (Page 86.) If so, what need of decreeing it now, above an hundred years after? Again: If the exorcists were ordained an hundred years before this Council sat, what chance was made by the decree of the Council? Or how came the power of casting out devils to cease upon it? You say, The Bishops still favored and desired to support it. Why, then, did they not support it? It must have been they (not the poor exorcists, who were but a degree above sextons) who had hitherto kept such numbers of them in pay.

What was become of them now? Were all the groaners and howlers dead, and no more to be procured for money? Or rather, did not the Bishops, think you, grow covetous as they grew rich, and so kept fewer and fewer of them in pay, till at length the whole business dropped?

13. These are your labored objections against the great promise of our Lord, "In my name shall they cast out devils;" whereby (to make sure work) you strike at him and his Apostles, just as much as at the primitive Fathers. But, by a strange jumble of ideas in your head, you would prove so much, that you prove nothing. By attempting to show all who claimed this power to be at once both fools and knaves, you have spoiled your whole cause, and, in the event, neither shown them to be one nor the other; as the one half of your argument all along just serves to overthrow the other. So that, after all, the ancient testimonies, touching this gift, remain firm and unshaken.

Section IV.

1. You told us above, that "the fourth miraculous gift was that of prophesying; the fifth, of seeing visions; the sixth, of discovering the secrets of men." (Page 72.) But here you jumble them all together, telling us, "The next miraculous gift is that of prophetic evisions, and ecstatic trances," (*ecstatic ecstasies*, you might have said,) "and the discovery of men's hearts." (Page 96.) But why do you thrust all three into one? Because, you say, "these seem to be the fruit of one spirit." Most certainly they are, whether it was the Spirit of Truth, or (as you suppose) the spirit of delusion.

2. However, it is the second of these on which you chiefly dwell, (the fifth of those you before enumerated,) taking but little notice of the fourth, "foretelling things to come," and one at all of the sixth, "discovering the secrets of men." The testimonies, therefore, for these remain in full force, as you do not even attempt to invalidate them. With regard to visions or ecstasies, you observe, First, that Tertullian calls ecstasy "a temporary loss of senses." (Page 97.) It was so, of the outward senses, which were then locked up. You observe, Secondly, that "Suidas" (a very primitive writer, who lived between eight and nine hundred years after Tertullian) "says, that of all the kinds of madness, that of the Poets and Prophets was

alone to be wished for.” I am at a loss to know what this is brought to prove. The question is, Were there visions in the primitive Church? You observe, Thirdly, that Philo the Jew says, (I literally translate his words, which you do not; for it would not answer your purpose,) “When the divine light shines, the human sets; but when that sets, this rises. This uses to befall the Prophets.” (Page 98.) Well, Sir, and what is this to the question? Why, “from these testimonies,” you say, “we may collect, that the vision or ecstasy of the primitive Church was of the same kind with those of the Delphic Pythia, or the Cumaean Sibyl.”

Well collected indeed! But I desire a little better testimony than either that of Philo the Jew, or Suidas, a lexicographer of the eleventh century, before I believe this. How little Tertullian is to be regarded on this head you yourself show in the very next page.

3. You say, Fourthly, “Montanus and his associates were the authors of these trances. They first raised this spirit of enthusiasm in the Church, and acquired great credit by their visions and ecstasies.” Sir, you forget; they did not “raise this spirit,” but rather Joel and St. Peter; according to whose words, the “young men saw visions,” before Montanus was born.

4. You observe, Fifthly, how Tertullian was “imposed upon by the craft of ecstatic visionaries,” (page 99,) and then fall upon Cyprian with all your might: Your objections to whom we shall now consider: —

And, First, you lay it down as a postulatam, that he was “found of power and Episcopal authority.” (Page 101.) I cannot grant this, Sir: I must have some proof; else this, and all you infer from it, will go for nothing.

You say, Secondly, “In all questionable points of doctrine or discipline, which he had a mind to introduce into the Christian worship, we find him constantly appealing to the testimony of visions and divine revelations. Thus he says to Caecilius, that he was divinely admonished to mix water with wine in the sacrament, in order to render it effectual.”

You set out unhappily enough. For this can never be a proof of Cyprian’s appealing to visions and revelations in order to introduce questionable

points of doctrine or discipline into the Christian worship; because this point was unquestionable, and could not then be “introduced into the Christian worship,” having had a constant place therein, as you yourself have showed, (*Introductory Discourse*, p. 57,) at least from the time of Justin Martyr.

Indeed, neither Justin nor Cyprian use those words, “In order to render it effectual.” They are an ingenious and honest addition of your own, in order to make something out of nothing.

5. I observe you take much the same liberty in your next quotation from Cyprian. “He threatens,” you say, “to execute what he was ordered to do ‘against them in a vision.’” (Page 102.) Here also the last words, “in a vision,” are an improvement upon the text. Cyprian’s words are, “I will use that admonition which the Lord commands me to use.”⁷ But neither was this in order to introduce any questionable point, either of doctrine or discipline; no more than his using the same threat to Pupianus, who had spoken ill of him and left his communion.

6. You go on: “He says likewise, he was admonished of God to ordain one Numidicus, a Confessor, who had been left for dead, half burnt and buried in stones.” (Pages 103, 104.) True, but what “questionable point of doctrine” or discipline did he introduce hereby? or by ordaining Celerinus; “who was overruled and compelled by a divine vision to accept that office?” So you affirm Cyprian says. But Cyprian says it not; at least, not in those words which you cite in the margin: which, literally translated, run thus: “I recommend to you Celerinus, joined to our Clergy, not by human suffrage, but by the divine favor.”⁸

“In another letter, speaking of Aurelius, whom he had ordained a Reader, he says to his Clergy and people, ‘In ordaining Clergy, my dearest brethren, I use to consult you first; but there is no need to wait for human testimonies, when the divine suffrage has been already signified.’”

An impartial man would wonder what you could infer from these five passages put together. Why, by the help of a short postulatam, “He was

fond of power,” (you have as much ground to say, “He was fond of bloodshed,”) you will make it plain, “this was all a trick to enlarge his episcopal authority.” But as that postulatum is not allowed, you have all your work to begin again.

7. Hitherto then the character of Cyprian is unhurt; but now you are resolved to blow it up at once. So you proceed: “The most memorable effect of any of his visions was his flight from his Church in the time of persecution. He affirms, that he was commanded to retire by a special revelation from heaven. Yet this plea was a mere fiction, contrived to quiet the scandal which was raised by his flight; and is confuted by himself, where he declares, it was the advice of Tertullus which prevailed with him to withdraw.” (Pages 104, 105.)

You here charge Cyprian with confuting himself, in saying, he “withdrew by the advice of Tertullus;” whereas he had “before affirmed, that he was commanded to retire by a special revelation from heaven.” Indeed he had not; there is no necessity at all for putting this construction upon those words, “The Lord who commanded me to retire;” which may without any force be understood of the written command, “When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.” (Matthew 10:23.) It is not therefore clear, that this plea of a special revelation was ever advanced. And if it was advanced, it still remains to be proved, that “it was nothing else but a mere fiction.”

8. Your citing his editor here, obliges me to add a remark, for which you give continual occasion: If either Rigalt, Mr. Dodwell, Dr. Grabe, Mr. Thirlby, or any editor of the Fathers, ever drops an expression to the disadvantage of the author whom he publishes or illustrates, this you account so much treasure, and will surely find a time to expose it to public view. And all these passages you recite as demonstration. These are doubtless mere oracles; although when the same person speaks in favor of the Father, his authority is not worth a straw. But you have “none of those arts which are commonly employed by disputants to palliate a bad cause!” (*Preface*, page 31.)

9. What you relate of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, you have not from himself, but only from one who lived near a hundred years after Dionysius was dead. Therefore he is not at all accountable for it; as neither am I for any vision of St. Jerome. But I am concerned in the consequence you draw from it: "If this was a fiction, so were Cyprian's too." That will not follow. Many objections may lie against the one, which have no place with regard to the other.

10. You now bring forth your grand discovery, that "all the visions of those days were contrived, or authorized at least, by the leading men of the Church. For they were all applied, either,

- (1.) To excuse the conduct of particular persons, in some instances of it liable to censure; or,
- (2.) To enforce some doctrine or discipline pressed by some, but not relished by others; or,
- (3.) To confirm things not only frivolous, but sometimes even superstitious and hurtful." (Page 109.)

Well, Sir, here is the proposition. But where is the proof? I hope we shall have it in your next "Free Inquiry;" and that you will then give us a few instances of such applications, from the writers of the three first centuries.

11. Being not disposed to do this at present, you fall again upon the poor "heretic Montanus; who first gave a vogue" (as you phrase it) "to visions and ecstasies in the Christian Church." (Page 110.) So you told us before. But we cannot believe it yet; because Peter and Paul tell us the contrary.

Indeed, you do not now mention Montanus because it is any thing to the question, but only to make way for observing, that those who wrote against him "employed such arguments against his prophecy as shake the credit of all prophecy. For Epiphanius makes this the very criterion between a true and a false prophet, 'that the true had no ecstasies, constantly retained his senses, and with firmness of mind apprehended and uttered the divine oracles.'" Sir, have you not mistook? Have you not transcribed one sentence in the margin, and translated another? That sentence which stands in your margin is this: "When there was need, the saints of God among the Prophets prophesied all things with the true

Spirit, and with a sound understanding and reasonable mind.” Now, it is difficult to find out how this comes to “shake the credit of all prophecy.”

12. Why thus: “Before the Montanists had brought those ecstasies into disgrace, the prophecy of the orthodox too was exerted in ecstasy. And so were the prophecies of the Old Testament, according to the current opinion of those earlier days.” (Page 111.)

That this was then “the current opinion,” you bring three citations to prove. But if you could cite three Fathers more during the three first centuries, expressly affirming that the Prophets were all out of their senses, I would not take their word. For though I take most of the Fathers to have been wise and good men, yet I know none of them were infallible. But do even these three expressly affirm it? No, not one of them; at least in the words you have cited. From Athenagoras you cite only part of a sentence, which, translated as literally as it will well bear, runs thus: “Who in an ecstasy of their own thoughts, being moved by the Divine Spirit, spoke the things with which they were inspired, even as a piper breathes into a pipe.” Does Athenagoras *expressly affirm* in these words, that the Prophets were “transported out of their senses?” I hope, Sir, you do not understand Greek. If so, you show here only a little harmless ignorance.

13. From Justin Martyr also you cite but part of a sentence. He speaks, very nearly, thus: —

“That the Spirit of God, descending from heaven, and using righteous men as the quill strikes the harp or lyre, may reveal unto us the knowledge of divine and heavenly things.” And does Justin *expressly affirm* in these words, that all the Prophets were “transported out of their senses?”

Tertullian’s words are: “A man being in the Spirit, especially when he beholds the glory of God, must needs lose sense.”⁹ Now, as it is not plain that he means hereby, lose his understanding, (it being at least equally probable, that he intends no more than, losing for the time the use of his outward senses,) neither can it be said that Tertullian expressly affirms, “The Prophets were all out of their senses.” Therefore you have not so

much as one Father to vouch for what you say was “the current opinion in those days.”

14. I doubt not but all men of learning will observe a circumstance which holds throughout all your quotations. The strength of your argument constantly lies in a loose and paraphrastical manner of translating. The strength of mine lies in translating all in the most close and literal manner; so that closeness of translation strengthens mine, in the same proportion as it weakens your arguments; a plain proof of what you elsewhere observe, that you use “no subtle refinements or forced constructions.” (*Preface*, page 31.)

15. But to return to Cyprian: “I cannot forbear,” you say, “relating two or three more of his wonderful stories. The first is, A man who had denied Christ was presently struck dumb: The second, A woman who had done so was seized by an unclean spirit, and soon after died in great anguish: The third, of which he says he was an eyewitness, is this, — The heathen Magistrates gave to a Christian infant part of what had been offered to an idol. When the Deacon forced the consecrated wine on this child, it was immediately seized with convulsions and vomiting; as was a woman who had apostatized, upon taking the consecrated elements.” (Pages 112, 113.) The other two relations Cyprian does not affirm of his own personal knowledge.

“Now, what can we think,” say you, “of these strange stories, but that they were partly forged, partly dressed up in this tragical form, to support the discipline of the Church in these times of danger and trial?” (Page 115.)

Why, many will think that some of them are true, even in the manner they are related; and that if any of them are not, Cyprian thought they were, and related them in the sincerity of his heart. Nay, perhaps some will think that the wisdom of God might, “in those times of danger and trial,” work things of this kind, for that very end, “to support the discipline of the Church.” And till you show the falsehood, or at least the improbability, of this, Cyprian’s character stands untainted; not only as a man of sense, (which you yourself allow,) but likewise of eminent

integrity; and consequently it is beyond dispute, that visions, the fifth miraculous gift, remained in the Church after the days of the Apostles.

Section V.

1. The sixth of the miraculous gifts which you enumerated above, namely, “the discernment of spirits,” you just name, and then entirely pass over. The seventh is, that of “expounding the Scriptures.” (Page 116.) You tack to it, “or the mysteries of God.” But, inasmuch as it is not yet agreed (as was intimated above) whether this be the same gift, it may just as well be left out.

2. Now, as to this, you say, “There is no trace of it to be found since the days of the Apostles. For even in the second and third centuries, a most senseless and extravagant method of expounding them prevailed. For which when we censure any particular Father, his apologists with one voice allege, ‘This is to be charged to the age wherein he lived, which could not relish or endure any better.’”

I doubt much, whether you can produce one single apologist for any “ridiculous comment on sacred writ,” who any where “alleges, that the second or third century could not relish or endure any better.” But if they were all to say this with one voice, yet no reasonable man could believe them. For it is notoriously contrary to matter of fact. It may be allowed, that some of these Fathers, being afraid of too literal a way of expounding the Scriptures, leaned sometimes to the other extreme. Yet nothing can be more unjust than to infer from hence, “that the age in which they lived could not relish or endure any but senseless, extravagant, enthusiastic, ridiculous comments on sacred writ.”

Will you say, that all the comments on Scripture, still to be found in the writings of Ignatius, Polycarp, Athenagoras, or even of Origen and Clemens Alexandrinus, are senseless and extravagant? If not, this charge must fall to the ground; it being manifest, that even “the age in which they lived” could both “endure and relish” sound, sensible, rational (and yet spiritual) comments on holy writ.

Yet this extravagant charge you have repeated over and over in various parts of your work; thrusting it upon your reader in season and out of season: How fairly, let all candid men judge.

3. Touching the miraculous gift of expounding Scripture, you say, “Justin Martyr affirms, it was conferred on him by the special grace of God.” (Page 117.) I cannot find where he affirms this. Not in the words you cite, which, literally translated, (as was observed before,) run thus: “He hath revealed to us whatso ever things we have understood by his grace from the Scriptures also.” You seem conscious, these words do not prove the point, and therefore eke them out with those of Monsieur Tillemont. But his own words, and no other, will satisfy me. I cannot believe it, unless from his own mouth.

4. Meantime, I cannot but observe an odd circumstance, — that you are here, in the abundance of your strength, confuting a proposition which (whether it be true or false) not one of your antagonists affirms. You are laboring to prove, “there was not in the primitive Church any such miraculous gift as that of expounding the Scriptures.” Pray, Sir, who says there was? Not Justin Martyr; not one among all those Fathers whom you have quoted as witnesses of the miraculous gifts, from the tenth to the eighteenth page of your “Inquiry.” If you think they do, I am ready to follow you step by step, through every quotation you have made.

5. No, nor is this mentioned in any enumeration of the miraculous gifts which I can find in the Holy Scriptures. Prophecy indeed is mentioned more than once, by the Apostles, as well as the Fathers. But the context shows, where it is promised as a miraculous gift, it means the foretelling things to come. All therefore which you say on this head is a mere *ignoratio elenchi*, “a mistake of the question to be proved.”

Section VI.

1. The Eighth and last of the miraculous gifts you enumerated was the gift of tongues. And this, it is sure, was claimed by the primitive Christians; for Irenaeus says expressly, “‘We hear many in the Church speaking with all kinds of tongues.’ And yet,” you say, “this was granted only on certain special occasions, and then withdrawn again from the Apostles

themselves: So that in the ordinary course of their ministry, they were generally destitute of it. This,” you say, “I have shown elsewhere.” (Page 119.) I presume, in some treatise which I have not seen.

2. But Irenaeus, who declares that “many had this gift in his days, yet owns he had it not himself.” This is only a proof that the case was then the same as when St. Paul observed, long before, “Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues?” (1 Corinthians 12:29, 30.) No, not even when those gifts were shed abroad in the most abundant manner.

3. “But no other Father has made the least claim to it.” (Page 120.) Perhaps none of those whose writings are now extant; at least not in those writings which are extant. But what are these in comparison of those which are lost? And how many were burning and shining lights within three hundred years after Christ, who wrote no account of themselves at all; at least, none which has come to our hands? But who are they that “speak of it as a gift peculiar to the times of the Apostles?” You say, “There is not a single Father who ventures to speak of it in any other manner.” (*Ibid.*) Well, bring but six Ante-Nicene Fathers who speak of it in this manner, and I will give up the whole point.

4. But you say, “After the apostolic times, there is not, in all history, one instance, even so much as mentioned, of any particular person who ever exercised this gift.” (*Ibid.*) You must mean, either that the Heathens have mentioned no instance of this kind, (which is not at all surprising,) or that Irenaeus does not mention the names of those many persons who in his time exercised this gift. And this also may be allowed without affecting in anywise the credibility of his testimony concerning them.

5. I must take notice here of another of your postulatus, which leads you into many mistakes. With regard to past ages, you continually take this for granted: “What is not recorded was not done.” But this is by no means a self-evident axiom: Nay, possibly it is not true. For there may be many reasons in the depth of the wisdom of God, for his doing many things at various times and places, either by his natural or supernatural power, which were never recorded at all. And abundantly more were recorded

once, and that with the fullest evidence, whereof, nevertheless, we find no certain evidence now, at the distance of fourteen hundred years.

6. Perhaps this may obtain in the very case before us. Many may have spoken with new tongues, of whom this is not recorded; at least, the records are lost in a course of so many years: Nay, it is not only possible that it may be so, but it is absolutely certain that it is so; and you yourself must acknowledge it; for you acknowledge that the Apostles, when in strange countries, spoke with strange tongues; that St. John, for instance, when in Asia Minor, St. Peter, when in Italy, (if he was really there,) and the other Apostles, when in other countries, in Parthia, Media, Phrygia, Pamphylia, spoke each to the natives of each, in their own tongues, the wonderful works of God. And yet there is no authentic record of this: There is not in all history, one well-attested instance of any particular Apostle's exercising this gift in any country whatsoever. Now, Sir, if your axiom were allowed, what would be the consequence? Even that the Apostles themselves more spoke with tongues than any of their successors.

7. I need, therefore, take no trouble about your subsequent reasonings, seeing they are built upon such a foundation. Only I must observe an historical mistake which occurs toward the bottom of your next page. Since the Reformation, you say, "This gift has never once been heard of, or pretended to, by the Romanists themselves." (Page 122.) But has it been pretended to (whether justly or not) by no others, though not by the Romanists? Has it "never once been heard of" since that time? Sir, your memory fails you again: It has undoubtedly been pretended to, and that at no great distance either from our time or country. It has been heard of more than once, no farther off than the valleys of Dauphiny. Nor is it yet fifty years ago since the Protestant inhabitants of those valleys so loudly pretended to this and other miraculous powers, as to give much disturbance to Paris itself. And how did the King of France confute that pretense, and prevent its being heard any more? Not by the pen of his scholars, but by (a truly heathen way) the swords and bayonets of his dragoons.

8. You close this head with a very extraordinary thought: “The gift of tongues may,” you say, “be considered as a proper test or criterion for determining the miraculous pretensions of all Churches. If among their extraordinary gifts they cannot show us this, they have none to show which are genuine.” (*Ibid.*)

Now, I really thought it had been otherwise. I thought it had been an adjudged rule in the case, “All these worketh one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will;” and as to every man, so to every Church, every collective body of men. But if this be so, then yours is no proper test for determining the pretensions of all Churches; seeing He who worketh as He will, may, with your good leave, give the gift of tongues, where He gives no other; and may see abundant reasons so to do, whether you and I see them or not. For perhaps we have not always known the mind of the Lord; not being of the number of his counselors. On the other hand, he may see good to give many other gifts, where it is not his will to bestow this. Particularly where it would be of no use; as in a Church where all are of one mind, and all speak the same language.

9. You have now finished, after a fashion, what you proposed to do in the Fourth place, which was, “to review all the several kinds of miraculous gifts which are pretended to have been in the primitive Church.” Indeed you have dropped one or two of them by the way: Against the rest you have brought forth your strong reasons. Those reasons have been coolly examined. And now let every impartial man, every person of true and unbiassed reason, calmly consider and judge, whether you have made out one point of all that you took in hand; and whether some miracles of each kind may not have been wrought in the ancient Church, for any thing you have advanced to the contrary.

10. From page 127 to page 158, you relate miracles said to be wrought in the fourth century. I have no concern with these; but I must weigh an argument which you intermix therewith again and again. It is in substance this: “If we cannot believe the miracles attested by the later Fathers, then we ought not to believe those which are attested by the earliest writers of the Church.” I answer, The consequence is not good; because the case is not the same with the one and with the other. Several objections, which do

not hold with regard to the earlier, may lie against the later, miracles; drawn either from the improbability of the facts themselves, such as we have no precedent of in holy writ; from the incompetency of the instruments said to perform them, such as bones, relics, or departed saints; or from the gross “credulity of a prejudiced or the dishonesty of an interested, relater.” (Page 145.)

11. One or other of these objections holds against most of the later, though not the earlier, miracles. And if only one holds, it is enough; it is ground sufficient for making the difference. If, therefore, it was true that there was not a single Father of the fourth age, who was not equally pious with the best of the more ancient, still we might consistently reject most of the miracles of the fourth, while we allowed those of the preceding ages; both because of the far greater improbability of the facts themselves, and because of the incompetency of the instruments. (Page 159.)

But it is not true, that “the fathers of the fourth age,” whom you mention, were equally pious with the best of the preceding ages. Nay, according to your account, (which I shall not now contest,) they were not pious at all. For you say, “They were willful, habitual liars.” And, if so, they had not a grain of piety. Now, that the earlier Fathers were not such has been shown at large; though, indeed, you complimented them with the same character. Consequently, whether these later Fathers are to be believed or no, we may safely believe the former; who dared not to do evil that good might come, or to lie either for God or man.

12. I had not intended to say any thing more concerning any of the miracles of the later ages; but your way of accounting for one, said to have been wrought in the fifth, is so extremely curious that I cannot pass it by.

The story, it seems, is this: “Hunneric, an Arian Prince, in his persecution of the orthodox in Africa, ordered the tongues of a certain society of them to be cut out by the roots. But, by a surprising instance of God’s good providence, they were enabled to speak articulately and distinctly without their tongues. And so continuing to make open profession of the same doctrine, they became not only Preachers, but living witnesses, of its truth.” (Page 182.)

Do not mistake me, Sir: I have no design at all to vouch for the truth of this miracle. I leave it just as I find it. But what I am concerned with is, your manner of accounting for it.

13. And, First, you say, “It may not improbably be supposed, that though their tongues were ordered to be cut to the roots, yet the sentence might not be so strictly executed as not to leave in some of them such a share of that organ as was sufficient, in a tolerable degree, for the use of speech.” (Page 183.)

So you think, Sir, if only an inch of a man’s tongue were to be neatly taken off, he would be able to talk tolerably well, as soon as the operation was over.

But the most marvelous part is still behind. For you add, “To come more close to the point: If we should allow that the tongues of these Confessors were cut away to the very roots, what will the learned Doctor say, if this boasted miracle should be found at last to be no miracle at all?” (Page 184.)

“Say?” Why, that you have more skill than all the “strolling wonder-workers” of the three first centuries put together.

But to the point: Let us see how you will set about it. Why, thus: “The tongue” (as you justly, though keenly, observe) “has generally been considered as absolutely necessary to the use of speech; so that, to hear men talk without it, might easily pass for a miracle in that credulous age. Yet there was always room to doubt, whether there was any thing miraculous in it or not. But we have an instance in the present century, which clears up all our doubts, and entirely decides the question: I mean, the case of a girl born without a tongue, who talked as easily and distinctly as if she had had one; an account of which is given in the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences at Paris.” (*Ibid.*)

14. And can you really believe this, that a girl “spoke distinctly and easily” without any tongue at all? And, after avowing this belief, do you gravely talk of other men’s credulity? I wonder that such a volunteer in

faith should stagger at any thing. Doubtless, were it related as natural only, not miraculous, you could believe that a man might see without eyes.

Surely there is something very peculiar in this; something extraordinary, though not miraculous; that a man who is too wise to believe the Bible, should believe everything but the Bible! should swallow any tale, so God be out of the question, though ever so improbable, ever so impossible!

15. "I have now," you say, "thrown together all which I had collected for the support of my argument;" (page 187;) after a lame recapitulation of which you add with an air of triumph and satisfaction: "I wish the Fathers the ablest advocates which Popery itself can afford; for Protestantism, I am sure, can supply none whom they would choose to retain in their cause; none who can defend them without contradicting their own profession and disgracing their own character; or produce any thing, but what deserves to be laughed at, rather than unanswered." (Pages 188, 189.)

Might; it not be well, Sir, not to be quite so sure yet? You may not always have the laugh on your side. You are not yet infallibly assured, but that even Protestantism may produce something worth an answer. There may be some Protestants, for aught you know, who have a few grains of common sense left, and may find a way to defend, at least the Ante-Nicene Fathers, without "disgracing their own character." Even such an one as I have faintly attempted this, although I neither have, nor expect to have, any preferment, not even to be a Lambeth Chaplain; which if Dr. Middleton is not, it is not his own fault.

V.

1. The last thing you proposed was, "to refute some of the most plausible objections which have been hitherto made." To what you have offered on this head, I must likewise attempt a short reply.

You say, "It is objected, First, that by the character I have given of the Fathers, the authority of the books of the New Testament, which were transmitted to us through their hands, will be rendered precarious and uncertain." (Page 190.)

After a feint of confuting it, you frankly acknowledge the whole of this objection. "I may venture," you say, "to declare, that if this objection be true, it cannot hurt my argument. For if it be natural and necessary, that the craft and credulity of witnesses should always detract from the credit of their testimony, then who can help it? And if this charge be proved on the Fathers, it must be admitted, how far so ever the consequences may reach." (Page 192.)

"If it be proved!" Very true. If that charge against the Fathers were really and substantially proved, the authority of the New Testament would be at an end, so far as it depends on one kind of evidence. But that charge is not proved. Therefore even the traditional authority of the New Testament is as firm as ever.

2. "It is objected," you say, "Secondly, that all suspicion of fraud in the case of the primitive miracles is excluded by that public appeal and challenge which the Christian apologists make to their enemies the Heathens, to come and see with their own eyes the reality of the facts which they attest." (Page 193.)

You answer: "This objection has no real weight with any who are acquainted with the condition of the Christians in those days." You then enlarge (as it seems, with a peculiar pleasure) on the general contempt and odium they lay under, from the first appearance of Christianity in the world, till it was established by the civil power. (Pages 194-196.)

"In these circumstances, it cannot be imagined," you say, "that men of figure and fortune would pay any attention to the apologies or writings of a sect so utterly despised." (Page 197.) But, Sir, they were hated, as well as despised; and that by the great vulgar, as well as the small. And this very hatred would naturally prompt them to examine the ground of the challenges daily repeated by them they hated; were it only, that, by discovering the fraud, (which they wanted neither opportunity nor skill to do, had there been any,) they might have had a better pretense for throwing the Christians to the lions, than because the Nile did not, or the Tiber did, overflow.

3. You add: "Much less can we believe that the Emperor or Senate of Rome should take any notice of those apologies, or even know indeed that any such were addressed to them." (*Ibid.*)

Why, Sir, by your account, you would make us believe, that all the Emperors and Senate together were as "senseless, stupid a race of blockheads and brutes," as even the Christians themselves.

But hold. You are going to prove it too: "For," say you, "should the like case happen now, that any Methodist, Moravian, or French prophet," (right skillfully put together,) "should publish an apology for his brethren, addressed to the King and Parliament; is it not wholly improbable, that the Government would pay any regard to it?" You should add, (to make the parallel complete,) "or know that any such was addressed to them."

No: I conceive the improbability supposed lies wholly on the other side. Whatever the Government of heathen Rome was, (which I presume you will not depreciate,) the Government of England is remarkable for tenderness to the very meanest subject. It is therefore not improbable in the least, that an address from some thousands of those subjects, how contemptible so ever they were generally esteemed, would not be totally disregarded by such a Government. But that they should "not know that any such had been addressed to them," is not only improbable, but morally impossible.

If therefore it were possible for the Heathens to "have a worse opinion of the ancient Christians than we," you say, "have of our modern fanatics," still it is utterly incredible that the Roman Government should, not only "take no notice of their apologies," but "not even know that any such were addressed to them."

4. "But the publishing books was more expensive then than it is now; and therefore we cannot think the Christians of those days were able to provide such a number of them as was sufficient for the information of the public." (Pages 198, 199.)

Nay, if they were not able to provide themselves food and raiment, they would be sure to provide a sufficient number of these; sufficient, at least, for the information of the Emperor and Senate, to whom these apologies were addressed. And how great a number, do you suppose, might suffice for them? How many hundred or thousand copies? I apprehend the Emperor would be content with one; and one more would be needful for the Senate. Now, I really believe the Christians of those days were able to provide both these copies; nay, and even two more; if it should have fallen out, that two or three Emperors were on the throne; even though we should suppose that in Tertullian's time there were but forty thousand of them in all Rome.

5. However, you plunge on: "Since, then, the Christians were not able to bear the expense of copying them," (whether the Heathens were disposed to buy them or no, is at present out of the question,) "there is great reason to believe, that their apologies, how gravely so ever addressed to Emperors and Senates, lay unknown for many years." (*Ibid.*) There is no great reason to believe it from any thing you have advanced yet. You add: "Especially when the publishing of them was not only expensive, but so criminal also, as to expose them often to danger, and even to capital punishment."

In very deed, Sir, I am sometimes inclined to suspect that you are yourself related to certain ancient Fathers, (notwithstanding the learned quotations which adorn your margin,) who used to say, *Graecum est: Non potest legi.*

¹⁰ You lay me under an almost invincible temptation to think so upon this very occasion. For what could induce you, if you knew what he said, to place at the bottom of this very page a passage from one of those apologists, Justin Martyr, which so clearly confutes your own argument? The words are: "Although death be determined against those who teach, or even confess, the name of Christ, we both embrace and teach it everywhere. And if you also receive these words as enemies, you can do no more than kill us." ¹¹ Could danger then, or the fear of "capital punishment," restrain those Christians from presenting these apologies? No; capital punishment was no terror to them, who daily offered themselves to the flames, till the very heathen butchers themselves were tired with slaughtering them.

There can therefore no shadow of doubt remain, with any cool and impartial man, but that these apologies were presented to the most eminent Heathens, to the Magistrates, the Senate, the Emperors. Nor, consequently, is there the least room to doubt of the truth of the facts therein asserted; seeing the apologists constantly desired their enemies “to come and see them with their own eyes;” — a hazard which those “crafty men” would never have run, had not the facts themselves been infallibly certain. This objection then stands against you in full force. For such a public appeal to their bitterest enemies must exclude all reasonable suspicion of fraud, in the case of the primitive miracles.

6. You tell us, it is objected, Thirdly, “that no suspicion of fraud can reasonably be entertained against those who exposed themselves, even to martyrdom, in confirmation of the truth of what they taught.” (*Ibid.*)

In order to invalidate this objection, you assert, that some of the primitive Christians might expose themselves to martyrdom, out of mere obstinacy; others, from a desire of glory; others, from a fear of reproach; but the most of all, from the hope of a higher reward in heaven; especially, as they believed the end of the world was near, and that the Martyrs felt no pain in death. “All which topics,” you say, “when displayed with art, were sufficient to inflame the multitude to embrace any martyrdom.” (Pages 200-204, 208.)

This appears very plausible in speculation. But fact and experience will not answer. You are an eloquent man, and are able to display any topic you please with art enough. Yet if you was to try, with all that art and eloquence, to persuade by all these topics, not a whole multitude, but one simple, credulous ploughman, to go and be shot through the head; I am afraid, you would scarce prevail with him, after all, to embrace even that easy martyrdom. And it might be more difficult still to find a man who, either out of obstinacy, fear of shame, or desire of glory, would calmly and deliberately offer himself to be roasted alive in Smithfield.

7. Have you considered, Sir, how the case stood in our own country, scarce two hundred years ago? Not a multitude indeed, and yet not a few,

of our own countrymen then expired in the flames. And it was not a general persuasion among them, that Martyrs feel no pain in death. That these have feeling, as well as other men, plainly appeared, in the case of Bishop Ridley, crying out, "I cannot burn, I cannot burn!" when his lower parts were consumed. Do you think the fear of shame, or the desire of praise, was the motive on which these acted? Or have you reason to believe it was mere obstinacy that hindered them from accepting deliverance? Sir, since "human nature has always been the same, so that our experience of what now passes in our own soul will be the best comment on what is delivered to us concerning others," let me entreat you to make the case your own. You must not say, "I am not one of the ignorant vulgar: I am a man of sense and learning." So were many of them; not inferior even to you, either in natural or acquired endowments. I ask, then, Would any of these motives suffice to induce you to burn at a stake? I beseech you, lay your hand on your heart, and answer between God and your own soul, what motive could incite you to walk into a fire, but an hope full of immortality. When you mention this motive, you speak to the point. And yet even with regard to this, both you and I should find, did it come to a trial, that the hope of a fool, or the hope of an hypocrite, would stand us in no stead. We should find, nothing else would sustain us in that hour, but a well-grounded confidence of a better resurrection; nothing less than the "steadfastly looking up to heaven, and beholding the glory which shall be revealed."

8. "But heretics," you say, "have been Martyrs." I will answer more particularly, when you specify who and when. It may suffice to say now, whoso ever he be, that, rather than he will offend God, calmly and deliberately chooses to suffer death, I cannot lightly speak evil of him.

But Cyprian says, "Some who had suffered tortures for Christ, yet afterwards fell into gross, open sin." It may be so; but it is nothing to the question. It does not prove, in the least, what you brought it to prove; namely, "that bad men have endured martyrdom." Do not evade, Sir, and say, "Yes, torments are a kind of martyrdom." True; but not the martyrdom of which we speak.

9. You save all at last, by declaring gravely, “It is not my design to detract in any manner from the just praise of those primitive Martyrs who sustained the cause of Christ at the expense of their lives.” (Page 112.) No. Who could ever suppose it was? Who could imagine it was your design to detract from the just praise of Justin, Irenaeus, or Cyprian? You only designed to show what their just praise was; namely, the praise of pickpockets, of common cheats and impostors. We understand your meaning, therefore, when you add, “It is reasonable to believe, that they were the best sort of Christians, and the chief ornaments of the Church, in their several ages.” (Page 213.)

10. You conclude: “My view is to show that their martyrdom does not add any weight to their testimony.” Whether it does or no, “it gives the strongest proof” (as you yourself affirm) “of the sincerity of their faith;” and consequently proves that “no suspicion of fraud can reasonably be entertained against them.” (*Ibid.*) But this (which you seem to have quite forgot) was the whole of the objection; and, consequently, this as well as both the former objections remain in their full force.

11. “It has been objected,” Fourthly, you say, that you “destroy the faith and credit of all history.” (Page 114.) But this objection, you affirm, “when seriously considered, will appear to have no sense at all in it.” (Page 215.)

That we will try. And one passage, home to the point, is as good as a thousand. Now, Sir, be pleased to look back. In your Preface, page 9, I read these words: “The credibility of facts lies open to the trial of our reason and senses. But the credibility of witnesses depends on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us. And though, in many cases, it may reasonably be presumed, yet in none can it certainly be known.”

If this be as you assert, (I repeat it again,) then farewell the credit of all history. Sir, this is not the cant of zealots: You must not escape so: It is plain, sober reason. If the credibility of witnesses, of all witnesses, (for you make no distinction,) depends, as you peremptorily affirm, on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us, and, consequently, though it may be presumed in many cases, yet can be certainly known in none;

then it is plain, all history, sacred or profane, is utterly precarious and uncertain. Then I may indeed presume, but I cannot certainly know, that Julius Caesar was killed in the Senate-house; then I cannot certainly know that there was an Emperor in Germany, called Charles the Fifth; that Leo the Tenth ever sat in the See of Rome, or Lewis the Fourteenth on the throne of France. Now, let any man of common understanding, judge, whether this objection has any sense in it, or no.

12. Under this same head, you fall again upon the case of witchcraft, and say, “There is not in all history any one miraculous act so authentically attested as the existence of witches. All Christian” (yea, and all heathen) “nations whatso ever have consented in the belief of them. Now, to deny the reality of facts so solemnly attested, and so universally believed, seem to give the lie to the sense and experience of all Christendom; to the wisest and best of every nation, and to public monuments subsisting to our own times.” (Page 221.)

What obliges you, then, to deny it? You answer: “The incredibility of the thing.” (Page 223.) O Sir, never strain at the incredibility of this, after you have swallowed an hundred people talking without tongues!

13. What you aim at in this also is plain, as well as in your account of the Abbe de Paris. The point of your argument is, “If you cannot believe these, then you ought not to believe the Bible: The incredibility of the things related ought to overrule all testimony whatso ever.”

Your argument, at length, would run thus: —

“If things be incredible in themselves, then this incredibility ought to overrule all testimony concerning them.

“But the gospel miracles are incredible in themselves.” Sir, that proposition I deny. You have not proved it yet. You have only now and then, as it were by the by, made any attempt to prove it. And till this is done, you have done nothing, with all the pother that you have made.

14. You reserve the home stroke for the last: “There is hardly a miracle said to be wrought in the primitive times, but what is said to be performed in our days. But all these modern pretensions we ascribe to their true cause, — the craft of a few, playing upon the credulity of the many, for private interest. When, therefore, we read of the same things done by the ancients, and for the same ends of acquiring wealth, credit, or power; how can we possibly hesitate to impute them to the same cause of fraud and imposture?” (Page 230.)

The reason of our hesitation is this: They did not answer the same ends. The modern Clergy of Rome do acquire credit and wealth by their pretended miracles. But the ancient Clergy acquired nothing by their miracles, but to be “afflicted, destitute, tormented.” The one gain all things thereby; the others lost all things. And this, we think, makes some difference. “Even unto this present hour,” says one of them, (writing to those who could easily confute him, if he spoke not the truth,) “we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat. We are become as the filth of the world, as the off-scouring of all things unto this day.” (1 Corinthians 4:11-13.) Now, Sir, whatever be thought of the others, we apprehend, such Clergy as these, laboring thus, unto the death, for such credit and wealth, are not chargeable with fraud and imposture.

VI.

I have now finished what I had to say with regard to your book. Yet I think humanity requires me to add a few words concerning some points frequently touched upon therein, which perhaps you do not so clearly understand.

We have been long disputing about Christians, about Christianity, and the evidence whereby it is supported. But what do these terms mean? Who is a Christian indeed? What is real, genuine Christianity? And what is the surest and most accessible evidence (if I may so speak) whereby I may know that it is of God? May the God of the Christians enable me to speak on these heads, in a manner suitable to the importance of them!

Section I.

1. I would consider, First, Who is a Christian indeed? What does that term properly imply? It has been so long abused, I fear, not only to mean nothing at all, but, what was far worse than nothing, to be a cloak for the vilest hypocrisy, for the grossest abominations and immoralities of every kind, that it is high time to rescue it out of the hands of wretched that are a reproach to human nature; to show determinately what manner of man he is, to whom this name of right belongs.

2. A Christian cannot think of the Author of his being, without abasing himself before Him; without a deep sense of the distance between a worm of earth, and Him that sitteth on the circle of the heavens. In His presence he sinks into the dust, knowing himself to be less than nothing in His eye; and being conscious, in a manner words cannot express, of his own littleness, ignorance, foolishness. So that he can only cry out, from the fulness of his heart, “O God! what is man? what am I?”

3. He has a continual sense of his dependence on the Parent of good for his being, and all the blessings that attend it. To Him he refers every natural and every moral endowment; with all that is commonly ascribed either to fortune, or to the wisdom, courage, or merit of the possessor. And hence he acquiesces in whatsoever appears to be His will, not only with patience, but with thankfulness. He willingly resigns all he is, all he has, to His wise and gracious disposal. The ruling temper of his heart is the most absolute submission, and the tenderest gratitude, to his sovereign Benefactor. And this grateful love creates filial fear; an awful reverence toward Him, and an earnest care not to give place to any disposition, not to admit an action, word, or thought, which might in any degree displease that indulgent Power to whom he owes his life, breath, and all things.

4. And as he has the strongest affection for the Fountain of all good, so he has the firmest confidence in Him; a confidence which neither pleasure nor pain, neither life nor death, can shake. But yet this, far from creating sloth or indolence, pushes him on to the most vigorous industry. It causes him to put forth all his strength, in obeying Him in whom he confides. So that he is never faint in his mind, never weary of doing whatever he believes to be His will. And as he knows the most acceptable worship of God is to

imitate Him he worships, so he is continually laboring to transcribe into himself all His imitable perfections; in particular, His justice, mercy, and truth, so eminently displayed in all His creatures.

5. Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the same likeness. He is full of love to his neighbor; of universal love; not confined to one sect or party; not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship; or to those who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance. But his love resembles that of Him whose mercy is over all His works. It soars above all these scanty bounds, embracing neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not only the good and gentle, but also the forward, the evil and unthankful. For he loves every soul that God has made; every child of man, of whatever place or nation. And yet this universal benevolence does in nowise interfere with a peculiar regard for his relations, friends, and benefactors; a fervent love for his country; and the most endeared affection to all men of integrity, of clear and generous virtue.

6. His love, as to these, so to all mankind, is in itself generous and disinterested; springing from no view of advantage to himself, from no regard to profit or praise; no, nor even the pleasure of loving. This is the daughter, not the parent, of his affection. By experience he knows that social love, if it mean the love of our neighbor, is absolutely different from self-love, even of the most allowable kind; just as different as the objects at which they point. And yet it is sure, that, if they are under due regulations, each will give additional force to the other, till they mix together never to be divided.

7. And this universal, disinterested love is productive of all right affections. It is fruitful of gentleness, tenderness, sweetness; of humanity, courtesy, and affability. It makes a Christian rejoice in the virtues of all, and bear a part in their happiness; at the same time that he sympathizes with their pains, and compassionates their infirmities. It creates modesty, condescension, prudence, together with calmness and evenness of temper. It is the parent of generosity, openness, and frankness, void of jealousy

and suspicion. It begets candor, and willingness to believe and hope whatever is kind and friendly of every man; and invincible patience, never overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good.

8. The same love constrains him to converse, not only with a strict regard to truth, but with artless sincerity and genuine simplicity, as one in whom there is no guile. And, not content with abstaining from all such expressions as are contrary to justice or truth, he endeavors to refrain from every unloving word, either to a present or of an absent person; in all his conversation aiming at this, either to improve himself in knowledge or virtue, or to make those with whom he converses some way wiser, or better, or happier than they were before.

9. The same love is productive of all right actions. It leads him into an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices, of whatever is due to relations of every kind; to his friends, to his country, and to any particular community, whereof he is a member. It prevents his willingly hurting or grieving any man. It guides him into an uniform practice of justice and mercy, equally extensive with the principle whence it flows. It constrains him to do all possible good, of every possible kind, to all men; and makes him invariably resolved, in every circumstance of life, to do that, and that only, to others, which, supposing he were himself in the same situation, he would desire they should do to him.

10. And as he is easy to others, so he is easy in himself. He is free from the painful swellings of pride, from the flames of anger, from the impetuous gusts of irregular self-will. He is no longer tortured with envy or malice, or with unreasonable and hurtful desire. He is no more enslaved to the pleasures of sense, but has the full power both over his mind and body, in a continued cheerful course of sobriety, of temperance and chastity. He knows how to use all things in their place, and yet is superior to them all. He stands above those low pleasures of imagination which captivate vulgar minds, whether arising from what mortals term greatness, or from novelty, or beauty. All these too he can taste, and still look upward; still aspire to nobler enjoyments. Neither is he a slave to fame; popular breath affects not him; he stands steady and collected in himself.

11. And he who seeks no praise, cannot fear dispraise. Censure gives him no uneasiness, being conscious to himself that he would not willingly offend, and that he has the approbation of the Lord of all. He cannot fear want, knowing in whose hand is the earth and the fulness thereof, and that it is impossible for Him to withhold from one that fears Him any manner of thing that is good. He cannot fear pain, knowing it; will never be sent, unless it be for his real advantage; and that then his strength will be proportioned to it, as it has always been in times past. He cannot fear death; being able to trust Him he loves with his soul as well as his body; yea, glad to leave the corruptible body in the dust, till it is raised incorruptible and immortal. So that, in honor or shame, in abundance or want, in ease or pain, in life or in death, always, and in all things, he has learned to be content, to be easy, thankful, happy.

12. He is happy in knowing there is a God, an intelligent Cause and Lord of all, and that he is not the produce either of blind chance or inexorable necessity. He is happy in the full assurance he has that this Creator and End of all things is a Being of boundless wisdom, of infinite power to execute all the designs of His wisdom, and of no less infinite goodness to direct all His power to the advantage of all His creatures. Nay, even the consideration of his immutable justice, rendering to all their due, of his unspotted holiness, of his all-sufficiency in Himself, and of that immense ocean of all perfections which center in God from eternity to eternity, is a continual addition to the happiness of a Christian.

13. A farther addition is made thereto, while, in contemplating even the things that surround him, that thought strikes warmly upon his heart, —

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!

while he takes knowledge of the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and wisdom in the things that are seen, the heavens, the earth, the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field. How much more, while, rejoicing in the constant care which he still takes of the work of his own hand, he breaks out, in a transport of love and praised “O Lord our Governor, how excellent are thy ways in all the earth! Thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!” While he, as it were, sees the Lord sitting upon His throne,

and ruling all things well; while he observes the general providence of God co-extended with His whole creation, and surveys all the effects of it in the heavens and earth, as a well-pleased spectator; while he sees the wisdom and goodness of His general government descending to every particular, so presiding over the whole universe as over a single person, so watching over every single person as if he were the whole universe; how does he exult when he reviews the various traces of the Almighty goodness, in what has befallen himself in the several circumstances and changes of his own life! all which he now sees have been allotted to him, and dealt out in number, weight, and measure. With what triumph of soul, in surveying either the general or particular providence of God, does he observe every line pointing out an hereafter, every scene opening into eternity!

14. He is peculiarly and inexpressibly happy, in the clearest and fullest conviction, “This all-powerful, all-wise, all-gracious Being, this Governor of all, loves me. This Lover of my soul is always with me, is never absent, no, not for a moment. And I love Him: There is none in heaven but thee, none on earth that I desire beside thee! And he has given me to resemble Himself; he has stamped His image on my heart. And I live unto Him; I do only His will; I glorify him with my body and my spirit. And it will not be long before I shall die unto Him; I shall die into the arms of God. And then farewell sin and pain; then it only remains that I should live with Him forever.”

15. This is the plain, naked portraiture of a Christian. But be not prejudiced against him for his name. Forgive his particularities of opinion, and (what you think) superstitious modes of worship. These are circumstances but of small concern, and do not enter into the essence of his character. Cover them with a veil of love, and look at the substance, — his tempers, his holiness, his happiness.

Can calm reason conceive either a more amiable or a more desirable character?

Is it your own? Away with names! Away with opinions! I care not what you are called. I ask not (it does not deserve a thought) what opinion you

are of, so you are conscious to yourself, that you are the man whom I have been (however faintly) describing.

Do not you know, you ought to be such? Is the Governor of the world well pleased that you are not?

Do you (at least) desire it? I would to God that desire may penetrate your inmost soul; and that you may have no rest in your spirit till you are, not only almost, but altogether, a Christian!

Section II.

1. The Second point to be considered is, What is real, genuine Christianity? whether we speak of it as a principle in the soul, or as a scheme or system of doctrine.

Christianity, taken in the latter sense, is that system of doctrine which describes the character above recited, which promises, it shall be mine, (provided I will not rest till I attain,) and which tells me how I may attain it.

2. First. It describes this character in all its parts, and that in the most lively and affecting manner. The main lines of this picture are beautifully drawn in many passages of the Old Testament. These are filled up in the New, retouched and finished with all the art of God.

The same we have in miniature more than once; particularly in the thirteenth chapter of the former Epistle to the Corinthians, and in that discourse which St. Matthew records as delivered by our Lord at his entrance upon his public ministry.

3. Secondly. Christianity promises this character shall be mine, if I will not rest till I attain it. This is promised both in the Old Testament and the New. Indeed the New is, in effect, all a promise; seeing every description of the servants of God mentioned therein has the nature of a command; in consequence of whose general injunctions: “Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ:” (1 Corinthians 11:1:) “Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:12.) and every

command has the force of a promise, in virtue of those general promises: “A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” (Ezekial 36:26, 27.) “This is the covenant that I will make after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts.” (Hebrews 8:10.) Accordingly, when it is said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;” (Matthew 22:37;) it is not only a direction what I shall do, but a promise of what God will do in me; exactly equivalent with what is written elsewhere: “The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed,” (alluding to the custom then in use,) “to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” (Deuteronomy 30:6.)

4. This being observed, it will readily appear to every serious person, who reads the New Testament with that care which the importances of the subject demands, that every particular branch of the preceding character is manifestly promised therein; either explicitly, under the very form of a promise, or virtually, under that of description or command.

5. Christianity tells me, in the Third place, how I may attain the promise; namely, by faith.

But what is faith? Not an opinion, no more than it is a form of words; not any number of opinions put together, be they ever so true. A string of opinions is no more Christian faith, than a string of beads is Christian holiness.

It is not an assent to any opinion, or any number of opinions. A man may assent to three, or three-and-twenty creeds: He may assent to all the Old and New Testament, (at least, as far as he understands them,) and yet have no Christian faith at all.

6. The faith by which the promise is attained is represented by Christianity, as a power wrought by the Almighty in an immortal spirit, inhabiting a house of clay, to see through that veil into the world of spirits, into things invisible and eternal; a power to discern those things which with eyes of flesh and blood no man hath seen or can see, either by reason

of their nature, which (though they surround us on every side) is not perceivable by these gross senses; or by reason of their distance, as being yet afar off in the bosom of eternity.

7. This is Christian faith in the general notion of it. In its more particular notion, it is a divine evidence or conviction wrought in the heart, that God is reconciled to me through his Son; inseparably joined with a confidence in him, as a gracious, reconciled Father, as for all things, so especially for all those good things which are invisible and eternal.

To believe (in the Christian sense) is, then, to walk in the light of eternity; and to have a clear sight of, and confidence in, the Most High, reconciled to me through the Son of his love.

8. Now, how highly desirable is such a faith, were it only on its own account! For how little does the wisest of men know of any thing more than he can see with his eyes! What clouds and darkness cover the whole scene of things invisible and eternal! What does he know even of himself as to his invisible part? what of his future manner of existence? How melancholy an account does the prying, learned philosopher, (perhaps the wisest and best of all Heathens,) the great, the venerable Marcus Antoninus, give of these things! What was the result of all his serious researches, of his high and deep contemplations? "Either dissipation, (of the soul as well as the body, into the common, unthinking mass,) or reabsorption into the universal fire, the unintelligent source of all things; or some unknown manner of conscious existence, after the body sinks to rise no more." One of these three he supposed must succeed death; but which, he had no light to determine. Poor Antoninus! with all his wealth, his honor, his power I with all his wisdom and philosophy,

What points of knowledge did he gain?
That life is sacred all, — and vain!
Sacred, how high, and vain, how low,
He could not tell; but died to know.

9. "He died to know!" and so must you, unless you are now a partaker of Christian faith. O consider this! Nay, and consider, not only how little you know of the immensity of the things that are beyond sense and time,

but how uncertainly do you know even that little! How faintly glimmering a light is that you have! Can you properly be said to know any of these things? Is that knowledge any more than bare conjecture? And the reason is plain. You have no senses suitable to invisible or eternal objects. What desiderata then, especially to the rational, the reflecting, part of mankind are these? A more extensive knowledge of things invisible and eternal; a greater certainty in whatever knowledge of them we have; and, in order to both, faculties capable of discerning things invisible.

10. Is it not so? Let impartial reason speak. Does not every thinking man want a window, not so much in his neighbor's, as in his own, breast? He wants an opening there, of whatever kind, that might let in light from eternity. He is pained to be thus feeling after God so darkly, so uncertainly; to know so little of God, and indeed so little of any beside material objects. He is concerned, that he must see even that little, not directly, but in the dim, sullied glass of sense; and consequently so imperfectly and obscurely, that it is all a mere enigma still.

11. Now, these very desiderata faith supplies. It gives a more extensive knowledge of things invisible, showing what eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither could it before enter into our heart to conceive. And all these it shows in the clearest light, with the fullest certainty and evidence. For it does not leave us to receive our notices of them by mere reflection from the dull glass of sense; but resolves a thousand enigmas of the highest concern by giving faculties suited to things invisible. O who would not wish for such a faith, were it only on these accounts! How much more, if by this I may receive the promise, I may attain all that holiness and happiness!

12. So Christianity tells me; and so I find it, may every real Christian say. I now am assured that these things are so: I experience them in my own breast. What Christianity (considered as a doctrine) promised, is accomplished in my soul. And Christianity, considered as an inward principle, is the completion of all those promises. It is holiness and happiness, the image of God impressed on a created spirit; a fountain of peace and love springing up into everlasting life.

Section III.

1. And this I conceive to be the strongest evidence of the truth of Christianity. I do not undervalue traditional evidence. Let it have its place and its due honor. It is highly serviceable in its kind, and in its degree. And yet I cannot set it on a level with this.

It is generally supposed, that traditional evidence is weakened by length of time; as it must necessarily pass through so many hands, in a continued succession of ages. But no length of time can possibly affect the strength of this internal evidence. It is equally strong, equally new, through the course of seventeen hundred years. It passes now, even as it has done from the beginning, directly from God into the believing soul. Do you suppose time will ever dry up this stream? O no! It shall never be cut off:

Labitur et laetur in omne volubilis aevum. ¹²

2. Traditional evidence is of an extremely complicated nature, necessarily including so many and so various considerations, that only men of a strong and clear understanding can be sensible of its full force. On the contrary, how plain and simple is this; and how level to the lowest capacity! Is not this the sum: “One thing I know; I was blind, but now I see?” An argument so plain, that a peasant, a woman, a child, may feel all its force.

3. The traditional evidence of Christianity stands, as it were, a great way off; and therefore, although it speaks loud and clear, yet makes a less lively impression. It gives us an account of what was transacted long ago, in far distant times as well as places. Whereas the inward evidence is intimately present to all persons, at all times, and in all places. It is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, if thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ. “This,” then, “is the record,” this is the evidence, emphatically so called, “that God hath given unto us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.”

4. If, then, it were possible (which I conceive it is not) to shake the traditional evidence of Christianity, still he that has the internal evidence (and every true believer hath the witness or evidence in himself) would stand firm and unshaken. Still he could say to those who were striking at the external evidence, “Beat on the sack of Anaxagoras.” But you can no

more hurt my evidence of Christianity, than the tyrant could hurt the spirit of that wise man.

5. I have sometimes been almost inclined to believe, that the wisdom of God has, in most later ages, permitted the external evidence of Christianity to be more or less clogged and incumbered for this very end, that men (of reflection especially) might not altogether rest there, but be constrained to look into themselves also, and attend to the light shining in their hearts.

Nay, it seems (if it may be allowed for us to pry so far into the reasons of the divine dispensations) that, particularly in this age, God suffers all kind of objections to be raised against the traditional evidence of Christianity, that men of understanding, though unwilling to give it up, yet, at the same time they defend this evidence, may not rest the whole strength of their cause thereon, but seek a deeper and firmer support for it.

6. Without this I cannot but doubt, whether they can long maintain their cause; whether, if they do not obey the loud call of God, and lay far more stress than they have hitherto done on this internal evidence of Christianity, they will not, one after another, give up the external, and (in heart at least) go over to those whom they are now contending with; so that in a century or two the people of England will be fairly divided into real Deists and real Christians.

And I apprehend this would be no loss at all, but rather an advantage to the Christian cause; nay, perhaps it would be the speediest, yea, the only effectual, way of bringing all reasonable Deists to be Christians.

7. May I be permitted to speak freely? May I, without offense, ask of you that are called Christians, what real loss would you sustain in giving up your present opinion, that the Christian system is of God? Though you bear the name, you are not Christians: You have neither Christian faith nor love. You have no divine evidence of things unseen; you have not entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. You do not love God with all your heart; neither do you love your neighbor as yourself. You are neither happy nor holy. You have not learned in every state therewith to be content; to rejoice evermore, even in want, pain, death; and in

everything so give thanks. You are not holy in heart; superior to pride, to anger, to foolish desires. Neither are you holy in life; you do not walk as Christ also walked. Does not the main of your Christianity lie in your opinion, decked with a few outward observances? For as to morality, even honest, heathen morality, (O let me utter a melancholy truth!) many of those whom you style Deists, there is reason to fear, have far more of it than you.

8. Go on, gentlemen, and prosper. Shame these nominal Christians out of that poor superstition which they call Christianity. Reason, rally, laugh them out of their dead, empty forms, void of spirit, of faith, of love. Convince them, that such mean pageantry (for such it manifestly is, if there is nothing in the heart correspondent with the outward show) is absolutely unworthy, you need not say of God, but even of any man that is endued with common understanding. Show them, that while they are endeavoring to please God thus, they are only beating the air. Know your time; press on; push your victories, till you have conquered all that know not God. And then He, whom neither they nor you know now, shall rise and gird himself with strength, and go forth in his almighty love, and sweetly conquer you all together.

9. O that the time were come! How do I long for you to be partakers of the exceeding great and precious promise! How am I pained when I hear any of you using those silly terms, which the men of form have taught you, calling the mention of the only thing you want, *cant!* the deepest wisdom, the highest happiness, *enthusiasm!* What ignorance is this! How extremely despicable would it make you in the eyes of any but a Christian! But he cannot despise you, who loves you as his own soul, who is ready to lay down his life for your sake.

10. Perhaps you will say, "But this internal evidence of Christianity affects only those in whom the promise is fulfilled. It is no evidence to me." There is truth in this objection. It does affect them chiefly, but it does not affect them only. It cannot, in the nature of things, be so strong an evidence to others as it is to them. And yet it may bring a degree of evidence, it may reflect some light on you also.

For, First, you see the beauty and loveliness of Christianity, when it is rightly understood; and you are sure there is nothing to be desired in comparison of it.

Secondly. You know the Scripture promises this, and says, it is attained by faith, and by no other way.

Thirdly. You see clearly how desirable Christian faith is, even on account of its own intrinsic value.

Fourthly. You are a witness, that the holiness and happiness above described can be attained no other way. The more you have labored after virtue and happiness, the more convinced you are of this. Thus far then you need not lean upon other men; thus far you have personal experience.

Fifthly. What reasonable assurance can you have of things whereof you have not personal experience? Suppose the question were, Can the blind be restored to sight? This you have not yourself experienced. How then will you know that such a thing ever was? Can there be an easier or surer way than to talk with one or some number of men who were blind, but are now restored to sight? They cannot be deceived as to the fact in question; the nature of the thing leaves no room for this. And if they are honest men, (which you may learn from other circumstances,) they will not deceive you.

Now, transfer this to the case before us: And those who were blind, but now see, — those who were sick many years, but now are healed, — those who were miserable, but now are happy, — will afford you also a very strong evidence of the truth of Christianity; as strong as can be in the nature of things, till you experience it in your own soul: And this, though it be allowed they are but plain men, and, in general, of weak understanding; nay, though some of them should be mistaken in other points, and held opinions which cannot be defended.

11. All this may be allowed concerning the primitive Fathers; I mean particularly Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Cyprian; to whom I would add Macarius and Ephraim Syrus.

I allow that some of these had not strong natural sense, that few of them had much learning, and none the assistances which our age enjoys in some respects above all that went before.

Hence I doubt not but whoever will be at the pains of reading over their writings for that poor end, will find many mistakes, many weak suppositions, and many ill-drawn conclusions.

12. And yet I exceedingly reverence them, as well as their writings, and esteem them very highly in love. I reverence them, because they were Christians, such Christians as are above described. And I reverence their writings, because they describe true, genuine Christianity, and direct us to the strongest evidence of the Christian doctrine.

Indeed, in addressing the Heathens of those times, they intermix other arguments; particularly, that drawn from the numerous miracles which were then performed in the Church; which they needed only to open their eyes and see daily wrought in the face of the sun.

But still they never relinquish this: "What the Scripture promises, I enjoy. Come and see what Christianity has done here; and acknowledge it is of God."

I reverence these ancient Christians (with all their failings) the more, because I see so few Christians now; because I read so little in the writings of later times, and hear so little, of genuine Christianity; and because most of the modern Christians, (so called,) not content with being wholly ignorant; of it, are deeply prejudiced against it, calling it enthusiasm, and I know not what.

That the God of power and love may make both them, and young and me, such Christians as those Fathers were, is the earnest prayer of, Reverend Sir,

Your real friend and servant.

January 24, 1748-9.

A

LETTER TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC.

1. YOU have heard ten thousand stories of us who are commonly called Protestants, of which if you believe only one in a thousand, you must think very hardly of us. But this is quite contrary to our Lord's rule, "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" and has many ill consequences; particularly this, — it inclines us to think as hardly of you. Hence we are on both sides less willing to help one another, and more ready to hurt each other. Hence brotherly love is utterly destroyed; and each side, looking on the other as monsters, gives way to anger, hatred, malice, to every unkind affliction; which have frequently broke out in such inhuman barbarities as are scarce named among the Heathens.

2. Now, can nothing be done, even allowing us on both sides to retain our own opinions, for the softening our hearts towards each other, the giving a check to this flood of unkindness, and restoring at least some small degree of love among our neighbors and countrymen? Do not you wish for this? Are you not fully convinced, that malice, hatred, revenge, bitterness, whether in us or in you, in our hearts or yours, are an abomination to the Lord? Be our opinions right, or be they wrong, these tempers are undeniably wrong. They are the broad road that leads to destruction, to the nethermost hell.

3. I do not suppose all the bitterness is on your side. I know there is too much on our side also; so much, that I fear many Protestants (so called) will be angry at me too, for writing to you in this manner; and will say, "It is showing you too much favor; you deserve no such treatment at our hands."

4. But I think you do. I think you deserve the tenderest regard I can show, were it only because the same God hath raised you and me from the dust of the earth, and has made us both capable of loving and enjoying him to eternity; were it only because the Son of God has bought you and me with his own blood. How much more, if you are a person fearing God, (as without question many of you are,) and studying to have a conscience voice of offense towards God and towards man?

5. I shall therefore endeavor, as mildly and inoffensively as I can, to remove in some measure the ground of your unkindness, by plainly declaring what our belief and what our practice is; that you may see, we are not altogether such monsters as perhaps you imagined us to be.

A true Protestant may express his belief in these or the like words: —

6. As I am assured that there is an infinite and independent Being, and that it is impossible there should be more than one; so I believe, that this One God is the Father of all things, especially of angels and men; that he is in a peculiar manner the Father of those whom he regenerates by his Spirit, whom he adopts in his Son, as co-heirs with him, and crowns with an eternal inheritance; but in a still higher sense the Father of his only Son, whom he hath begotten from eternity.

I believe this Father of all, not only to be able to do whatso ever pleaseth him, but also to have an eternal right of making what and when and how he pleaseth, and of possessing and disposing of all that he has made; and that he of his own goodness created heaven and earth, and all that is therein.

7. I believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Savior of the world, the Messiah so long foretold; that, being anointed with the Holy Ghost, he was a Prophet, revealing to us the whole will of God; that he was a Priest, who gave himself a sacrifice for sin, and still makes intercession for transgressors; that he is a King, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and will reign till he has subdued all things to himself.

I believe he is the proper, natural Son of God, God of God, very God of very God; and that he is the Lord of all, having absolute, supreme,

universal dominion over all things; but more peculiarly our Lord, who believe in him, both by conquest, purchase, and voluntary obligation.

I believe that he was made man, joining the human nature with the divine in one person; being conceived by the singular operation of the Holy Ghost, and born of the blessed Virgin Mary, who, as well after as before she brought him forth, continued a pure and unspotted virgin.

I believe he suffered inexpressible pains both of body and soul, and at last death, even the death of the cross, at the time that Pontius Pilate governed Judea, under the Roman Emperor; that his body was then laid in the grave, and his soul went to the place of separate spirits; that the third day he rose again from the dead; that he ascended into heaven; where he remains in the midst of the throne of God, in the highest power and glory, as Mediator till the end of the world, as God to all eternity; that, in the end, he will come down from heaven, to judge every man according to his works; both those who shall be then alive, and all who have died before that day.

8. I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy in himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us; enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions; purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies, to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.

9. I believe that Christ by his Apostles gathered unto himself a Church, to which he has continually added such as shall be saved; that this catholic, that is, universal, Church, extending to all nations and all ages, is holy in all its members, who have fellowship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that they have fellowship with the holy angels, who constantly minister to these heirs of salvation; and with all the living members of Christ on earth, as well as all who are departed in his faith and fear.

10. I believe God forgives all the sins of them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel; and that, at the last day, all men shall rise again, every one with his own body.

I believe, that as the unjust shall, after their resurrection, be tormented in hell for ever, so the just shall enjoy inconceivable happiness in the presence of God to all eternity.

11. Now, is there any thing wrong in this? Is there any one point which you do not believe as well as we?

But you think we ought to believe more. We will not now enter into the dispute. Only let me ask, If a man sincerely believes thus much, and practices accordingly, can anyone possibly persuade you to think that such a man shall perish everlastingly?

12. "But does he practice accordingly?" If he does not, we grant all his faith will not save him. And this leads me to show you, in few and plain words, what the practice of a true Protestant is.

I say, a *true Protestant*; for I disclaim all common swearers, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards; all whoremongers, liars, cheats, extortioners; in a word, all that live in open sin. These are no Protestants; they are no Christians at all. Give them their own name; they are open Heathens. They are the curse of the nation, the bane of society, the shame of mankind, the scum of the earth.

13. A true Protestant believes in God, has a full confidence in his mercy, fears him with a filial fear, and loves him with all his soul. He worships God in spirit and in truth, in everything gives him thanks; calls upon him with his heart as well as his lips, at all times and in all places; honors his holy name and his word, and serves him truly all the days of his life.

Now, do not you yourself approve of this? Is there any one point you can condemn? Do not you practice as well as approve of it? Can you ever be happy if you do not? Can you ever expect true peace in this, or glory in the world to come, if you do not believe in God through Christ? if you do

not thus fear and love God? My dear friend, consider, I am not persuading you to leave or change your religion, but to follow after that fear and love of God without which all religion is vain. I say not a word to you about your opinions or outward manner of worship. But I say, all worship is an abomination to the Lord, unless you worship him in spirit and in truth; with your heart, as well as your lips; with your spirit, and with your understanding also. Be your form of worship what it will, but in everything give him thanks; else it is all but lost labor. Use whatever outward observances your please, but put your whole trust in him; but honor his holy name and his word, and serve him truly all the days of your life.

14. Again: A true Protestant loves his neighbor, that is, every man, friend or enemy, good or bad, as himself, as he loves his own soul, as Christ loved us. And as Christ laid down his life for us, so is he ready to lay down his life for his brethren. He shows this love, by doing to all men, in all points, as he would they should do unto him. He loves, honors, and obeys his father and mother, and helps them to the uttermost of his power. He honors and obeys the King, and all that are put in authority under him. He cheerfully submits to all his Governors, Teachers, spiritual Pastors, and Masters. He behaves lowly and reverently to all his betters. He hurts nobody, by word or deed. He is true and just in all his dealings. He bears no malice or hatred in his heart. He abstains from all evil speaking, lying and slandering; neither is guile found in his mouth. Knowing his body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, he keeps it in sobriety, temperance, and chastity. He does not desire other men's goods; but is content with that he hath; labors to get his own living, and to do the whole will of God in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call him.

15. Have you any thing to reprove in this? Are you not herein even as he? If not, (tell the truth,) are you not condemned both by God and your own conscience? Can you fall short of anyone point hereof without falling short of being a Christian?

Come, my brother, and let us reason together. Are you right if you only love your friend and hate your enemy? Do not even the Heathens and

publicans so? You are called to love your enemies; to bless them that curse you, and to pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. But are you not disobedient to the heavenly calling? Does your tender love to all men, not only the good, but also the evil and unthankful, approve you the child of your Father which is in heaven? Otherwise, whatever you believe and whatever you practice, you are of your father the devil. Are you ready to lay down your life for your brethren? And do you do unto all as you would they should do unto you? If not, do not deceive your own soul: You are but a Heathen still. Do you love, honor, and obey your father and mother, and help them to the utmost of your power? Do you honor and obey all in authority? all your Governors, spiritual Pastors, and Masters? Do you behave lowly and reverently to all your betters? Do you hurt nobody, by word or deed? Are you true and just in all your dealings? Do you take care to pay whatever you owe? Do you feel no malice, or envy, or revenge, no hatred or bitterness to any man? If you do, it is plain you are not of God: For all these are the tempers of the devil. Do you speak the truth from your heart to all men, and that in tenderness and love? Are you “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile?” Do you keep your body in sobriety, temperance, and chastity, as knowing it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that, if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy? Have you learned, in every state wherein you are, therewith to be content? Do you labor to get your own living, abhorring idleness as you abhor hell-fire? The devil tempts other men; but an idle man tempts the devil. An idle man’s brain is the devil’s shop, where he is continually working mischief. Are you not slothful in business? Whatever your hand finds to do, do you do it with your might? And do you do all as unto the Lord, as a sacrifice unto God, acceptable in Christ Jesus?

This, and this alone, is the old religion. This is true, primitive Christianity. O when shall it spread over all the earth! When shall it be found both in us and you? Without waiting for others, let each of us, by the grace of God, amend one.

16. Are we not thus far agreed? Let us thank God for this, and receive it as a fresh token of His love. But if God still loveth us, we ought also to love one another. We ought, without this endless jangling about opinions, to provoke one another to love and to good works. Let the points wherein we

differ stand aside; here are enough wherein we agree, enough to be the ground of every Christian temper, and of every Christian action.

O brethren, let us not still fall out by the way! I hope to see you in heaven. And if I practice the religion above described, you dare not say I shall go to hell. You cannot think so. None can persuade you to it. Your own conscience tells you the contrary. Then if we cannot as yet think alike in all things, at least we may love alike. Herein we cannot possibly do amiss. For of one point none can doubt a moment, — “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

17. In the name, then, and in the strength of God, let us resolve, First, not to hurt one another; to do nothing unkind or unfriendly to each other, nothing which we would not have done to ourselves: Rather let us endeavor after every instance of a kind, friendly, and Christian behavior towards each other.

Let us resolve, Secondly, God being our helper, to speak nothing harsh or unkind of each other. The sure way to avoid this, is to say all the good we can, both of and to one another: In all our conversation, either with or concerning each other, to use only the language of love; to speak with all softness and tenderness; with the most endearing expression which is consistent with truth and sincerity.

Let us, Thirdly, resolve to harbour no unkind thought, no unfriendly temper, towards each other. Let us lay the axe to the root of the tree; let us examine all that rises in our heart, and suffer no disposition there which is contrary to tender affection. Then shall we easily refrain from unkind actions and words, when the very root of bitterness is cut up.

Let us, Fourthly, endeavor to help each other on in whatever we are agreed leads to the kingdom. So far as we can, let us always rejoice to strengthen each other's hands in God. Above all, let us each take heed to himself, (since each must give an account of himself to God,) that he fall not short of the religion of love; that he be not condemned in that he himself approveth. O let you and I (whatever others do) press on to the prize of our high calling! that, being justified by faith, we may have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ; that we may rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement; that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Let us count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord; being ready for him to suffer the loss of all things, and counting them but dung, that we may win Christ.

I am

Your affectionate servant, for Christ's sake.

DUBLIN, *July* 18, 1749.

A ROMAN CATECHISM,
FAITHFULLY DRAWN OUT OF THE ALLOWED
WRITINGS OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

WITH A REPLY THERETO.

PREFACE.

It has been a frequent complaint among some of the Romish Church, that the Protestants have misrepresented the doctrine of their Church: On the other side, the Protestants accuse the writers in that Church, of concealing, disguising, and palliating their doctrines. The latter justify their charge by producing such authors as have in several ages not only taught that doctrine, but taught it as the doctrine of their Church; the former deny the charge, by appealing from particular authors to an higher authority, to Councils and public acts and decrees, to Missals, Breviaries, and Catechisms. Now, though those Protestants are not to be blamed, when the authors they quote have been first licensed and approved in that Church, and were never afterward condemned by it; yet in composing this Catechism, to avoid contention as much as I can, I have generally observed their directions, and have seldom made use of particular authors, but when it is for the explication of a doctrine that is not sufficiently explained, or for confirmation of a doctrine generally received. I am very confident that the quotations throughout are true, having again and again examined them; and I have been as careful as I could not to mistake the sense of them; that I might rightly understand and truly represent the doctrine which I profess to censure; for without a faithful and impartial examination of an error, there can be no solid confutation of it.

SECTION I.

OF THE CHURCH, AND RULE OF FAITH.

QUESTION 1. **W**HAT is the Church of Rome?

ANSWER. The Church of Rome is that Society of Christians which professes it necessary to salvation to be subject to the Pope of Rome,¹³ as the alone visible head of the Church.¹⁴

REPLY. Christ is the Head, from whom the whole body is fitly joined together. And the holding to that Head (Colossians 2:19) is the one great note of the Church, given by St. Austin. (*De Unit. Eccles.* c. 3, 4.) But there is neither in Scripture nor antiquity any evidence for a visible head, and much less for the visible head, the Pope; and, least of all, that it is necessary to salvation to be subject to him.

If it is necessary to salvation to be subject to him, it is necessary to know who is the Pope; but that the world hath often been divided about, when there were sometimes three, and for about forty years together two, Popes. — Vide *Theod. Niem. de Schism. Univers.*

Q. 2. How comes subjection to the Pope to be necessary to salvation, and an essential note of the Church?

A. Because the Pope is Christ's Vicar, St. Peter's successor, (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 6; Decret. de Reform.* cap. 1; *Bulla Pii IV, sup. Form. Juram.*.) and hath the supreme power on earth over the whole Church. (*Con. Trid. Sess. 14, c. 7.*) "The Church is called one, as it has one invisible Head, — Christ; and one visible who doth possess the chair at Rome, as the lawful successor of St. Peter, prince of the Apostles." (*Catech. Rom.* par. 1, c. 10, n. 11.)

REPLY. If Christ gave no such power to St. Peter, or the Pope be not St. Peter's successor, then the Pope has no pretense to this power. Now, we read that "Christ gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, for the work of the ministry and the edifying the body." (Ephesians 4:11, 12.) But that he gave one Apostle pre-eminence above the rest, much less absolute power over them, we read not. This power they were forbidden to attempt or desire; (Matthew 20:26;) and St. Paul was so far from acknowledging it, that he challenged an equality with the rest of the Apostles, (Galatians 1:15, 17,) and, upon occasion, withstood St. Peter. (Galatians 2:11.)

To this we may add the judgment of St. Cyprian: "The other Apostles are the same St. Peter was, endowed with an equal fellowship of honor and power." (*Epist. de Unit. Eccles.*)

Q. 3. What authority doth the Church of Rome challenge?

A. She declares that she is the mother and mistress of all Churches; (*Concil. Later. 4, can. 2; Concil. Trid. Sess. 7; De Bapt. can. 3, etc.*;) and that to believe her so to be is necessary to salvation. (*Bulla Pii IV, super. Form. Jur.*) Pope Innocent III. thus decreed: "As God is called universal Lord, because all things are under His dominion; so the Church of Rome is called Catholic, or universal, because all Churches are subject unto her." (*Apud Baron. Annal. 1199.*)

REPLY. As it was foretold, so it was fulfilled: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:3.) There the Church began; and therefore, in the Synodical Epistle of the Second General Council of Constantinople, Jerusalem is called "the mother of all Churches." (*Baron. A. D. 382, p. 461.*)

If she is the mistress because she is the mother, (as Pope Innocent I. would have it, *Epist. 1, Concil.*, tom. 4, p. 5,) then Jerusalem was the mistress. If the mistress because she was once the imperial city, then Constantinople was so likewise; and accordingly it was decreed in the Fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon, can. 28, "That the Church of

Constantinople should have equal privileges with that of Rome, because she is the imperial seat.”

And if she claims this sovereign authority upon any other reason, she never had, nor can ever prove, a right to it.

This is confirmed by Pope Pius II., (when a Cardinal,) who saith, that “before the time of the Nicene Council, little regard was had to the Church of Rome.” (*Epist.* 288.)

Q. 4. What use doth she make of this authority?

A. She requires all persons, upon her sole authority, to receive and believe the doctrines she proposes to be received and believed,¹⁵ and without the belief of which she declares there is no salvation.¹⁶

REPLY. “The gospel which was preached of me, is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 1:11, 12.)

“Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed.” (Verses 8, 9.)

The Church of Rome cannot avoid St. Paul’s anathema, when she requires to bow down before an image, which the Scripture forbids; and forbids to read the Scripture, which it requires.

And without doubt the text of the Apostle holds as much against any other, as against himself or an angel from heaven.

Q. 5. Doth not the Church of Rome acknowledge the holy Scripture to be a sufficient rule for faith and manners?

A. No: For there are some doctrines proposed by that Church as matters of faith, and some things required as necessary duty, which are by many learned men among themselves confessed not to be contained in Scripture.

REPLY. We read in Scripture of “the faith once delivered to the saints;” (Jude 3;) and “all” or the whole “Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17.)

The Scripture, therefore, is a rule sufficient in itself, and was by men divinely inspired at once delivered to the world; and so neither needs, nor is capable of, any further addition.

So Tertullian: “Let Hermogenes show that this thing is written. If it be not written, let him fear the woe pronounced against them that add to, or take from, Scripture.” (*Contra Hermog.*, c. 22.)

Q. 6. What doctrines of faith and matters of practice are thus acknowledged not to be in Scripture?

A. The doctrines of transubstantiation, (*Scotus in 4 Sent. Dist. 11, q. 3, et Yribarn in Scot.*) of the seven sacraments, (*Bellarm. 1. 2, de Effectu Sacram.*, c. 25, sec. *Secunda probatio*,) of purgatory, (*Roffens. contra Luther.*, art. 18,) and the practice of half-communion, (*Concil. Constan.*, Sess. 13, *Cassander*, art. 22,) worshipping of saints and images, (*Bellarm. de Cult. Sanct.*, 1. 3, c. 9, sec. *Praeterea. Cassand. Consult.*, art. 21, sec. 4,) indulgences, (*Polyd. Virg. de Invent.*, 1. 8, c. 1,) and service in an unknown tongue. (*Bellarm. de Verb. Dei*, 1. 2, c. 26.)

REPLY. On the contrary, St. Augustine writes, “If anyone concerning Christ and his Church, or concerning any other things which belong to faith or life, I will not say if *we*, but (which St. Paul hath added) if *an angel from heaven*, preach unto you besides what ye have received in the Law and Evangelical Writings, let him be accursed.” (*Contr. Petil.*, 1. 3, c. 6.) For as all faith is founded upon divine authority, so there is now no divine authority but the Scriptures; and, therefore, no one can make that to

be of divine authority which is not contained in them. And if transubstantiation and purgatory, etc., are not delivered in Scripture, they cannot be doctrines of faith.

Q. 7. What doth the Church of Rome propound to herself as an entire rule of faith?

A. Scripture with tradition; and she requires that the traditions be received and revered with the like pious regard and veneration as the Scriptures; and whosoever knowingly contemns them, is declared by her to be accursed. (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 4; Decret. de Can. Script.*)

REPLY. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men;" (Matthew 15:9;) forbidding that as unlawful which God hath not forbidden, and requiring that as necessary duty which God hath not required.

So St. Hierom: "The sword of God," his word, "doth smite those other things, which they find and hold of their own accord, as by apostolical tradition, without the authority and testimony of Scripture." (*In Cap. 1, Aggaei.*)

Q. 8. What do they understand by traditions?

A. Such things belonging to faith and manners as were dictated by Christ, or the Holy Ghost in the Apostles, and have been preserved by a continual succession in the Catholic Church, from hand to hand, without writing. (*Concil. Trid. ibid.*)

REPLY. But St. Cyril affirms, "It behoveth us not to deliver, no, not so much as the least thing of the holy mysteries of faith, without the holy Scripture. That is the security of our faith, not which is from our own inventions, but from the demonstration of the holy Scriptures." (*Catechis. 5.*)

Q. 9. What are those traditions which they profess to have received from Christ and his Apostles?

A. The offering the sacrifice of the mass for the souls in purgatory, (*Conc. Trid. Sess. 22, c. 2,*) the mystical benedictions, incensings, garments, and many other things of the like kind, (c. 5,) salt, spittle, exorcisms, and wax candles used in baptism, etc., (*Catech. Rom., par. 2, c. 2, n. 59, 65, etc.,*) the Priests shaving the head after the manner of a crown. (*Ibid. c. 7, n. 14.*)

REPLY. "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men." (Mark 7:8.)

"It is necessary even for novices to learn the Scriptures, that the mind may be well confirmed in piety, and that they may not be accustomed to human traditions." (St. Basil in *Reg. Brev. Reg. 95.*)

The Church of Rome hath no more to show for their holy water, and incensings, and salt, and spittle, etc., than the Pharisees for their traditions; and since they no less impose them as divine than the other, they are alike guilty with them.

Q. 10. Doth the Church of Rome agree with other Churches in the number of canonical books of Scripture?

A. No: For she hath added to the canonical books of the Old Testament, Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the two Books of Maccabees,¹⁷ and a new part of Esther and Daniel; which whole Books, with all their parts,¹⁸ whosoever rejects as not canonical, is accursed. (*Concil. Trident. Sess. 4, Decret. de Scriptur.*)

REPLY. These apocryphal books were wrote after prophecy and divine inspiration ceased, and so were not received by the Jewish Church, (to whom "were committed the oracles of God," Romans 3:2,) nor by the Christian Church, as the Sixtieth Canon of the Council of Laodicea shows, where there is a catalog of the canonical Books, without any mention of these.

“As therefore the Church doth read Tobias, Judith, and the Books of the Maccabees, but doth not receive them into the canonical Scriptures; so it doth read the two volumes of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus for the edification of the people, not to establish the authority of ecclesiastical principles.” St. Jerome. (*In Prologo Proverb.*) — See *Bellarm. de Verbo*, 1.1, c. 10 *init.*

Q. 11. Are the people of the Church of Rome permitted to read the Scripture in a tongue vulgarly known?

A. No; they were for a time permitted to read it, under the caution of a license, where it could be obtained; (*Reg. Ind. Libr. Prohib. Reg. 4.*;) but since they are forbid it, or to have so much as any summary or historical compendium of it in their own tongue. (*Index Libr. Prohib. Auctor. Sixti V., et Clem. VIII. Observat. circa 4 Regulam.*)

REPLY. Under the Law, the people had the Scriptures in a tongue vulgarly known; and they were required to read the law, and to be conversant in it: “These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart,” etc.; (Deuteronomy 6:6;) and accordingly our Savior sends them thither: “Search the Scriptures.” (John 5:39.) So St. Paul requires that his “Epistle be read to all the brethren;” (1 Thessolonians 5:27;) and, if so, it was wrote in a language they understood. And so it was in the primitive Church; therefore St. Chrysostom exhorts his hearers, though secular men, to provide themselves Bibles, the medicines of their souls, to be their perpetual instructors. (*Comment. in Colossians 3:16.*)

Q. 12. For what reason is the Scripture thus prohibited among them?

A. “Because,” say they, “if it be permitted to be read everywhere, without difference, there would more prejudice than profit proceed from it.” (*Reg. Ind. Libr. Prohib. Reg. 4.*)

REPLY. In the Apostles’ times there were some that “wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction;” and yet the Apostle thought of no other expedient than to give the Christians a caution, that they were “not also led away with the error of the wicked.” (2 Peter 3:16, 17.) The way to

prevent this, therefore, is, not to keep the Scriptures from the people, which “were written for our learning,” (Romans 15:4,) but to exhort them to a diligent perusal of them: “Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures.” (Matthew 22:29.)

“The sheep should not cast away their skin, because wolves sometimes hide themselves under it.” (*St. Austin de Serm. Dom. in Monte.*)

Q. 13. Since the Scripture may be misunderstood, have they no judge to determine the sense of it?

A. They say, “It belongs to the Church” (of Rome) “to judge of the sense of Scripture, and no one may presume to interpret the Scripture contrary to the sense which Mother Church hath held and doth hold.” (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 4. Decret. de Edit. et Usu Script.*)

It cannot be called the Church of God where the legitimate successor of St. Peter in the Roman Chair, and the undoubted vicar of Christ, doth not preside: What the Church doth teach is the express word of God; and what is taught against the sense and consent of the Church, is the express word of the devil. (*Cardinal Hosius de expresso Dei verbo*, p. 642, 643.)

REPLY. While the Apostles were alive, the Churches of Christ, in matters of dispute, applied themselves to them, as in the point of circumcision; (Acts 15:2;) but since they of the Church of Rome can never prove the like infallibility in their Church, nor direct us where it is, we think ourselves as well in our Church as they can be in theirs; and that as long as we have the Scripture, the Church is to be referred to the Scripture, and not the Scripture to the Church; and that, as the Scripture is the best expounder of itself, so the best way to know whether any thing be of divine authority, is to apply ourselves to the Scripture.

“If I would have the Church demonstrated, it is not by human teachings, but by the divine oracles.” (*St. Aug. de Unit. Eccles. cap. 3.*)

“The way for understanding the Scriptures, is to demonstrate out of themselves, concerning themselves.” (*Clem. Alex. Strom. 1. 7. p. 757.*)

SECTION II.

OF REPENTANCE AND OBEDIENCE.

QUESTION 14. WHAT doth the Church of Rome teach concerning repentance?

Answer:

- (1.) It teacheth that contrition, which is a sorrow for sin past, and a purpose of not committing it for the future, though perfected with charity, is not sufficient to reconcile a person to God without penance, or confession to a Priest either in act or desire. (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 14, c. 4. Catech. Rom. Pars 2, de Sacrament. Paenit. n. 38.*)
- (2.) She teacheth that attrition, or imperfect contrition, proceeding merely from the fear of Hell, is equivalent to contrition, by virtue of confession; and that attrition doth dispose to receive the grace of the sacrament of penance, and leads to justification. (*Sess. 14, cap. 4. Bellarm. de Paenit. 1. 2, c. 18, sec. Sed sciendum est.*) — See Question 77.

REPLY. Contrition is but another word for repentance; and repentance is a qualification for pardon and reconciliation: “A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” (Psalms 51:17.) “Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” (Acts 3:19.) The same texts which make contrition sufficient, without confession to the Priest, make attrition insufficient without there be contrition. And as the former doctrine of the insufficiency of contrition without confession, makes that necessary which God hath not made necessary; so this latter of the sufficiency of attrition upon confession to the Priest without contrition, makes that unnecessary which God hath made necessary.

Q. 15. What is the judgment of the Church of Rome as to good works?

A. The Church of Rome doth affirm that the good works of justified persons do truly deserve eternal life; (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 6, c. 16;*) and if anyone say that such works do not truly deserve an increase of grace here, and eternal life hereafter, let him be accursed. (*Ibid. Can. 32.*)

“Our good works do merit eternal life, not only by virtue of God’s covenant and acceptation, but also by reason of the work itself.” (*Bellarm. de Justif. 1. 5, c. 17.*)

REPLY. Truly to deserve is to make God our debtor: “To him that worketh” (that is, that meriteth) “is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” (Romans 4:4.) “But can a man be profitable to God?” (Job 22:2.) Our Savior teaches us otherwise: “When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:10.)

A command to do it, and grace to obey that command, and a “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” as a reward, (2 Corinthians 4:17,) will shame the pretense of real merit, and turn the anathema upon themselves. And they may as soon reconcile light and darkness, as the grace of God and merit of Christ to this doctrine.

Q. 16. But is there no allowance for such as have not good works of their own sufficient to merit for themselves?

A. Yes; there are indulgences to be obtained, by which persons may be discharged from the punishment of sin here and in purgatory; and if any affirm these indulgences to be useless, or that the Church hath no power to grant them, he is accursed. (*Concil. Trid. Sess. 20, Decret. de Indulg.*)

The Popes and Prelates of the Church are judges appointed by God to remit faults and punishments in his name by an indolence, if so be justice be satisfied through the application of the satisfaction of Christ and his saints. (*Bellarm. de Indulg. 1. 1, c. 5, sec. Jam vero.*)

REPLY. What God binds, no person can untie; and what he unties, no man can bind. But this course of indulgence, still upheld in the Church of

Rome, doth untie what God doth bind; it makes sin easy and cheap, and prostitutes the strict rules of Christianity to the basest purposes. For when a person can have a plenary indulgence for so trivial a satisfaction as the standing before the doors of St. Peter's Church at Rome, when the Pope blesses the people at Easter, it makes sin as easy to be committed as pardoned.

Q. 17. How far do those indulgences extend?

A. Sometimes to days, sometimes to years, nay, some of them were plenary indulgences; ¹⁹ some were for a discharge from punishments here, others from the pains of purgatory, ²⁰ and some granted an eternal reward

Q. 18. Upon what terms were those indulgences to be obtained?

A. By money, ²¹ pilgrimages, ²² assisting the Pope, ²³ reciting certain prayers. ²⁴

REPLY. The scandal given by them was so notorious, that order was given by the Council of Trent for reforming the abuses of them; but when the Fathers thought fit not to discover those abuses, and only forbade wicked gain, (*Sess. 25, Decret. de Indulg.*), they left a large scope for making a gain of them. And two of the Popes under whom that Council sat, viz., Paul III., and Julius III., (*A Bull of Indulgence to the Fraternity of the Altar*, Paris, 1550, verse *B. Taylor's Defence*, Part II., 1. 2, p. 8,) proceeded in the same course as their predecessors, if they did not exceed them; for by their Bulls, there is granted to all such of the Fraternity of the Holy Altar, as visit the Church of St. Hilary of Chartres, during the six weeks of Lent, 775,700 years of pardon, besides fourteen or fifteen plenary indulgences. And since that, Urban VIII., (*Bullar. to 3.*, p. 74,) and Clement X., (A.D. 1671. *Bull upon the Canonization of five Saints*), have granted by their indulgence a plenary remission of sins.

Q. 19. Upon what pretense or reason is the doctrine and practice of indulgences founded?

A. Upon works of supererogation,²⁵ that is, the overplus of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints, which is a treasury, (*Concil. Trid. Sess.*, 21, c. 9,) committed to the Church's custody,²⁶ and to be disposed of as she sees meet. (*Bellarm. Ibid.* c. 3.)

REPLY. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;" (Romans 8:18;) so 2 Corinthians 4:17. "Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12.) If there be no comparison betwixt the reward and our sufferings for it, then no one has merit to transfer to another; and if every man must give an account of himself, then no man can be saved by the merits of another. But suppose there is a superabundance of satisfactions in the saints; yet what need is there of them, when there is such an infinite value in the sufferings of Christ, who "by one offering hath forever perfected them that are sanctified;" (Hebrews 10:14;) or who gave the Church the power so to apply them?

Q. 20. Whither do the souls of those go that die in a state of grace, but are not sufficiently purged from their sins, or have not had a plenary indulgence for the remission of them?

A. Such go to purgatory, a place of torment in the other world, near to hell, (*Bellarm. de Purg.*, 1. 2, c. 6, sec. *Quinta est*,) where they are to continue till they have made full satisfaction for their sins, and are thoroughly purged and prepared for heaven, whereinto no unclean thing can enter. (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 1, c. 6, n. 3.)

Q. 21. How come those persons to be punished in the other world, who depart in a state of grace out of this?

A. Because they have not here fulfilled the penance imposed upon them, or due from them to God. (*Bellarm. de Indulg.*, 1.1, c. 6, 7.) See Quest. 19.

REPLY. That those that die in a state of grace are yet in a state of torment, and are to be purged in the other world, is contrary to Scripture and antiquity. "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

(Romans 8:1.) “Whom he justified, them he also glorified.” (Verse 30.) “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth?” (Verses 33, 34.) As justification and condemnation are here opposed by the Apostle, so are condemnation and glorification; and he that is justified, upon the same reason that he cannot be condemned, shall be glorified. Now, the elect are justified before they go out of this world; and consequently shall have nothing laid to their charge in the next.

“The servants of God then have peace, then enjoy quiet rest and security; when, being drawn from these storms of the world, we arrive at the haven of our everlasting habitation and security; when, this death being ended, we enter into immortality.” (*St. Cypr. de Mortal.*, sec. 2.)

“Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43.) paradise is acknowledged to be the seat of the blessed. (*Bellarm. de Sanct. Beat.*, 1. 1, c. 3, Testim. 4.) Now, if there was a purgation necessary for sinners, he that believed and repented not till the last moment of his life, might be well supposed to need it; and should have been sent rather to purgatory than paradise.

After the night of this life there is no purgation; and “it is better to be corrected and purged now, than to be sent to the torment there, where the time of punishing is and not of purging.” (*Greg. Nazianz. Orat.* 15, in *Plag. Grand.*)

Q. 22. Of what continuance is the punishment of that state?

A. It is but for an appointed time; and the person is to continue in it till he is purged from his sin, and has suffered the punishment due to it. (*Catech. Ibid.*; *Bellarm. De Purg.*, 1. 2, c. 8, sec. *Quantum ad primum.*)

REPLY. The state that believers immediately enter upon after death, is said to be “life” for the comfort, and “everlasting” for the continuance, of it.

“He that believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (John 5:24.)

So St. Cyprian: “The end of this life being completed, we are divided into the habitations of everlasting, either death or immortality.” (*Ad Demetr.*, sec. 16.)

Q. 23. Is there no way by which the souls of those that are in purgatory may be delivered out of that prison, and their time of torment shortened?

A. They may be helped and delivered by the suffrages of the faithful that are alive; that is, by prayers, alms, and masses; and other works of piety, such as indulgences. (*Concil. Trid.*, *Sess. 25, Decr. de Purgat.*; *Sess. 22*, can. 3. *Bellarmin. de Purgat.*, 1. 2, c. 16, sec. *Ad haec.*)

REPLY. “Betwixt us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you” (to relieve you) “cannot.” (Luke 16:26.)

As the state in which Abraham and Lazarus were, needed no relief; so that in which the rich man was, could not obtain it. “After death is no help to be gotten by godliness or repentance. Lazarus doth not there go to the rich man, nor the rich man unto Lazarus. For the garners are sealed up, and the time is fulfilled.” (*Epiphanius contr. Cathar.*, Haer. 59.)

And if a man’s own repentance cannot help him, much less can another’s good works profit him.

So St. Jerome: “While we are in this world, we may be able to help one another, either by our prayers, or by our counsels: But when we shall come before the judgment-seat of Christ, neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah, can intreat for anyone; but every one must bear his own burden.” (*Lib. 3, Com. in Galat.*, c. 6.) And he elsewhere saith: “What shall be to all in the day of judgment, this is accomplished to every one at the day of death.” (*In Joel*, c. 2.)

Q. 24. Is the doctrine of purgatory a matter of faith, and necessary to be believed?

A. Yes: For whosoever shall say that there is no debt of temporal punishment to be paid, either in this world or in purgatory, before there can be an admission into heaven, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid.*, Sess. 6, Can. 30, & Sess. 25, *Decret. de Purg.*) And whosoever shall say, The sacrifice of the mass is not to be used for the dead, is accursed. (*Ibid.*, Sess. 22, Can. 3.) This is one of the principles, without the belief of which there is no salvation. (*Bulla Pii Quarti.*)

REPLY. Bishop Fisher saith, that there is none or very little mention of purgatory among the ancients. (*Roffens. Lutheri Confut.*, Art. 18; & *Polyd. Virg. de Invent.* 1. 8, c. 1.) It is then no little encroachment on the Christian world, to make it now a doctrine of faith, and to require it, upon pain of damnation, to be believed.

Q. 25. In what place were the souls of the Patriarchs, and other good men, before the coming of Christ?

A. Before the death and resurrection, (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 1, c. 6, n. 3, 6,) or ascension of Christ, (*Bellarm. de Christ.*, 1. 4, c. 11,) the gates of heaven were open to none; and the souls of good men departed were detained in a certain place called *Limbus Patrum*, which is the uppermost part of hell; the lowermost being the place of the damned; next above that, purgatory; next to that, *limbus infantum*; above that, *limbus patrum*. (*Bellarm. de Purg.* 1. 2, c. 6, sec. *Quod autem.*)

REPLY. We read that Elijah was taken up into heaven, (2 Kings 2:11,) and he and Moses appeared in glory. (Luke 9:30; Matthew 17:2.) And Abraham is represented as in paradise, the blessed abode of good men in the other world. (Luke 16:23.)

So St. Austin expounds it: "The bosom of Abraham is the rest of the blessed poor, whose is the kingdom of heaven, into which, after this life, they are received." (*Quaest. Evangel.*, 1. 2, c. 38.)

Q. 26. In what condition were they while thus detained in limbo?

A. They are not agreed in the nature and condition of the place: For the Catechism saith, “They were sustained by hope, and were without any sense of grief.” (N. 3.) And presently, that, “although they were without other sense of grief, yet, being kept in suspense, they were tormented with the hope of that blessed glory which they did expect.” (N. 4.)

REPLY. But the Scripture tells us, that the state where Abraham was, was not only a state of rest, but also of comfort. (Luke 16:25.)

Q. 27. How and when were they delivered thence?

A. They were delivered by Christ at his descent into hell; (*Catech. Rom., Ibid.*, n. 5, 6;) so that ever since that place remains empty. (*Bellarmin. de Purg.*, 1. 2, c. 6, sec. *Octava est.*)

REPLY. The Scripture says not one word of this.

Q. 28. What use do they make of this doctrine?

A. Hereby they give a reason why there is neither precept nor example in the Old Testament for the invocation of saints departed, (*Bellarmin. de Sanct. Beat.*, 1. 1, c. 19, sec. *Item Exod.*) because they were, for their punishment, enclosed in this place, and were there held bound by the devils, till delivered by Christ. (*Catech. Rom., ibid.*, n. 5.) And so the people of those times only prayed to God; and did not use to say, “Holy Abraham, pray for me.” (*Bellarmin., Ibid.*)

REPLY. There is neither precept nor example for the invocation of saints in the New Testament; and if that be a reason for a *limbus* before Christ, it may be a reason for a *limbus* still; and they may as well exclude the saints from heaven now as then, if there be no more for their invocation in the New Testament than was in the Old. Thus Salmero, a learned disputant in the Council of Trent: “Invocations of saints have no express ground in all the Scriptures.” (*Ad 1 Tim.* 2, Disp. 7, sec. *Sed cum autem et nec obstat.*)

SECTION III.

OF DIVINE WORSHIP.

QUESTION 29. **O**F what doth the service in the Roman Church consist?

ANSWER. It consists of prayers and hymns offered to God, angels, and saints; of lessons taken out of the Scriptures, and legends; and of profession of faith in the creeds.

REPLY. Cardinal Quignonius, at the instance of Pope Paul the Third, reformed the Breviary; and instead of legends, set Scriptures for the lessons. But Pope Pius Quintus, who afterward undertook to reform it also, prohibited that of Quignonius, (*Bulla Prefixa Breviar. Rom. Jussu Pii V. Edit.*) and instead of the Scriptures, placed legends again; and so it continues.

Q. 30. In what language is their service performed?

A. It is performed in all places among them in the Latin tongue, which is in no place vulgarly understood.

Q. 31. Is the having the service in an unknown tongue enjoined in the Church of Rome?

A. Yes: It is required that it should be celebrated in the Latin tongue; and whosoever shall say that it ought only to be administered in the vulgar tongue is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 23, c. 8, & Can. 9.*) Hence, when of late years the Missal, or Mass-book, was translated into French, it was declared, by Pope Alexander the Seventh, to be a “seed-plot of disobedience, rashness, and schism;” and he calls them that did it, “sons of perdition;” and doth “condemn, reprobate, and forbid” that Missal.

REPLY. In divine worship, (as in all other actions,) the first thing to be considered is the end, and the next thing is the means conducing to that end. The end is the honor of God, and the edification of the Church; and then God is honored, when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion: But that cannot be done, where the tongue it is celebrated in is not understood.

Thus we are taught by the Apostle: "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men." (1 Corinthians 14:2.) "If I know not the meaning of the voice, he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." (Verse 11.) "If thou shalt bless with the Spirit," (by the gift of an unknown tongue,) "how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks?" (Verse 16.) How can the people be attentive to the lessons, answer at the responses, be devout in the prayers, profess their faith in the creeds, when they do not understand what is read, prayed, or professed? Thus St. Ambrose, on 1 Corinthians 14: "It is evident that the mind is ignorant where the tongue is not understood. The unskillful person, hearing what he doth not understand, knows not the conclusion of the prayer, and doth not answer, Amen."

Q. 32. What are the objects of worship in the Church of Rome?

A. Besides the blessed Trinity, angels, the Virgin Mary, and saints.

REPLY. Our Savior says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10.) As divine worship is due to God, so it is not lawful to give it to any other.

The Church of Rome doth acknowledge this, but says the worship they give to saints and angels is not of that kind (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 3 c. 2, n. 8, par. 4, c. 6, n. 3.)

But what worship is peculiar to God, if prayer is not? So thought St. Ambrose: "Thou only art to be invocated." (*De Obitu Theodos.*)

For God alone can receive our prayer, or can give what we pray for, or be the object of our faith and trust.

Q. 33. What honor do they give to the angels?

A.

- (1.)The Church of Rome teaches that angels are to be worshipped, (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 3, c. 2, n. 8, 9, *venerari, adorare, colere*.) involved, and prayed to. (*Ibid.*, n. 10.) And they have litanies and prayers composed for this purpose. (*Litaniae, sec. Angelorum, vid. Horologium Tutelarum Angeli a Drexelio*. p. 84, Duac. 1623.)
- (2.)They teach, that as every particular person hath a guardian angel from his birth, (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 4, cap. 9, sec. 1, n. 4, 6,) so it is fit to commit themselves more particularly to him, (*Horolog. Drex.*, p. 108,) after this manner: “Blessed angel! to whose care our loving Creator hath committed me, defend me this day, I beseech you, from all dangers, and direct me in the way I ought to walk.” (*The Child’s Catechism*, 1678.)

REPLY. We honor the holy angels, as they are God’s ministers, and are “sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation.” (Hebrews 1:14.) But, to worship or pray to them, we dare not, as it is what they themselves refuse and abhor, (Revelations 19:10,) and the Scripture doth condemn as “a sign of a fleshly mind, vainly intruding into those things which we have not seen.” (Colossians 2:18.) Theodoret, upon this text, saith, that the practice of worshipping angels continued a long time in Phrygia and Pisidia; wherefore the Synod of Laodicea doth forbid praying to angels: “For Christians ought not to forsake the Church of God, and depart aside and invoke angels, which are things forbidden.” (*Conc. Laod.*, Can. 35.)

Q. 34. What religious honor do they give to the saints?

A. They pray to them as their intercessors, make confessions to them, offer incense, and make vows to them, venerate their images and relics.

Q. 35. For what reason do they pray to saints?

A. That by their help they may obtain benefits from God, (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 25, de Invocat.*) who doth confer many favors upon mankind, by their merit, and grace, and intercession. (*Catech. Rom., par. 3, c. 2, sec. 12.* — *Missal. Rom. proprium Missarum de Sanctis.*)

Q. 36. After what manner do they pray to saints?

A. They pray to them as favorites with God, that they would take them into their protection, and would obtain those things of God for them which they want. Therefore they plead that they have two different forms of prayers; for to God they properly say, "Have mercy upon us, hear us:" To a saint, "Pray for us." (*Catech. Rom., par. 4, c. 6, n. 3.*)

Q. 37. But have they not those forms in their Missals, Breviaries, and common books of devotion, which are particularly and immediately applied to the saints for obtaining what they want?

A. Yes; it is too manifest to be denied; and though they have been more sparing of late years, yet nothing formerly more frequent. As, for instance: In a Missal printed at Paris, an. 1520, fol. 51, there is this prayer to St. Agnes: —

"O Agnes, woman of the Lamb, do thou enlighten us within! Destroy the roots of sin, O excellent Lady. After the grievances of the world, do thou translate us to the company of the blessed!"

REPLY. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Timothy 2:5, 6.)

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:34.)

As there is but one God to us, though "there are gods many, and lords many;" (1 Corinthians 8:6;) so to us there is but "one Mediator," or

Intercessor, though we should grant there are many intercessors and mediators. For though the angels and saints may intercede for us in heaven, that no more makes them such intercessors as we may pray to, than because there are gods many, we may pray to them, as we do to the true God.

The Scripture knows no difference between a Mediator of intercession and redemption: He alone makes intercession for us that died and rose, and is at the right hand of God. And He alone has a right to our prayers, and to Him alone may we address them.

So Origen: "All prayers, and supplications, and thanksgivings, are to be sent up to God the Lord of all, by that High Priest who is above all angels, being the living Word of God." (Lib. 5, *Cont. Cels.*, pp. 233, 239.)

So again: "We ought to pray only to the God over all, and his only Son, the first-born of every creature, who, as our High Priest, offers his prayers to his God, and our God." (Lib. 8, pp. 395, 402.)

To have other mediators and intercessors is "not to hold the Head," (Colossians 2:19,) in the judgment of the Apostle, and the Council of Laodicea, where it is said, "Christians ought not to forsake the Church and invoke angels. If any man, therefore, be found to give himself to this privy idolatry, let him be anathema; because he hath forsaken our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, and betaken himself to idolatry."

Q. 38. What is the worship they give to the Virgin Mary?

A. They fly unto her as the advocatrix of the faithful, the mother of God; that by prayer to her they may obtain help through her most excellent merits with God. (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 4, cap. 5, n. 8.)

REPLY. We honor this blessed Virgin as the mother of the holy Jesus, and as she was a person of eminent piety; but we do not think it lawful to give that honor to her which belongs not to a creature, and doth equal her with her Redeemer.

Q. 39. Have they not some singular forms of devotion to her?

A. Yes; for apprehending her to be in glory superior to all created beings, they offer a service to her, beyond what they give either to angels or saints.

Q. 40. After what manner do they apply themselves to her?

A. According to some Missals, they ask her to command her Son, by the right and authority of a mother; (*Missal. Paris. Anno 1520, folio 65;*) or, as it is in the Breviaries used at this day, “Show thyself a mother.” (*Brev. Rom. Fest. Assump.*) they pray to her, that she would loose the bands of the guilty, bring light to the blind, would make them mild and chaste, and cause their hearts to burn in love to Christ. (*Officium B. M. in the hymn called Planctus B. M., Antwerp, 1641.*)

In a book printed lately in London, the author saith, that “whatever gifts are bestowed upon us by Jesus, we receive them by the mediation of Mary; no one being gracious to Jesus that is not devoted to Mary; that the power of Mary in the kingdom of Jesus is suitable to her maternity; and though the condition of some great sinners may be so deplorable, that the limited excellency and merits cannot effectually bend the mercies of Jesus to relieve them; yet such is the acceptableness of the mother of Jesus to Jesus, that whosoever is under the verge of her protection, may confide in her intercession to Jesus;” that the person devoted to her, is to beg of her to accompany him as his “sacred guide, advocate, and champion, against the assaults of sin and sensuality.” (*Contemplations of the Life and Glory of Holy Mary, etc., pp. 7-9, 14. Printed anno 1685.*)

Much after the fore-cited manner did the Council of Constance invoke the blessed Virgin, as other Councils used to do the Holy Ghost, calling her the “mother of grace, the fountain of mercy;” and they call on her for “light from heaven.”

REPLY. We cannot but wonder at the applications made to the blessed Virgin in the Church of Rome, whose acts on earth, and whose power in heaven, the Scripture doth very sparingly relate, or is altogether silent in.

We read nothing there of her bodily assumption into heaven, nor of her exaltation to a throne above angels and archangels. (*Brev. Rom. Aestiv. Fest. Assump.*) We read nothing there of her being the mother of grace and mercy, (*Officium parvum B. M. ad Matutin., Catech. par. 4, c. 5, n. 8,*) the queen and gate of heaven, the advocatrix of sinners; (*Completor. Catech. par. 4, c. 5, n. 8;*) and of her power in destroying all heresies in the world, (*Fest. Assump.*) and being all things to all. (*Missale Paris. ibid. & Le Psaultier de Jesus. Paris, 1620, p. 126.*)

When we read so much of the blessed Virgin in books of this kind, and so little of her in the divine writings, we cannot but reflect upon what is said by Epiphanius, of a certain sect of women that in his time offered cakes to the Virgin Mary, which he calls an “impious thing,” and altogether “contrary to the doctrine of the Holy Ghost.” (*Haeres. 78, p. 1054. Par. 1622.*) And he further adds, “This the Holy Ghost doth warn us of, in that Christ saith, ‘Woman, what have I to do with thee?’ where he calls her woman, and as it were prophesying, to refute those schisms and heresies which he knew would arise in the world; and that no one, being moved by a certain admiration of the blessed Virgin, might turn himself to those dotages of heresies.” And he adds, “Let the Virgin Mary be honored, but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be adored.” (*Haeres., 79, n. 4, 7, etc.*) Much more hath that Father there to this purpose.

But what would this Father have said, if, instead of a chair adorned and set forth in honor of the Virgin Mary, (as those women did,) he had found her advanced to a throne of a mediatrix in heaven? What, if instead of cakes, there had been litanies and prayers offered to her, and that in more abundance than to Christ himself? What, if he had found them praying, “O holy mother, succor the miserable, help the weak, comfort those that mourn?” (*Breviar. Rom. Aestiv. Suffragia.*) I doubt not but he would have said of this, what he doth of the other, that they “would obtrude her upon us for God;” and have called it “heresy and idolatry.”

Q. 41. What external representations or memorials have they in the Church of Rome, which they give veneration and worship to?

A. They have the relics and images of the Virgin Mary and saints (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 25, de Invoc.*)

Q. 42. What do they mean by relics?

A. The bodies or remainders of them, or particular things belonging or relating to them when alive, as an arm, or thigh, bones, or ashes; (*Ex Decret. Regist. Praefix. Brev. Rom.*;) and the part in which they suffered; (*Catech. Rom*, par. 3, c. 2, n. 15;) or the things by which they suffered; as the chains with which St. Peter was bound. (*Brev. Rom. Par. Aestiv., Aug. Fest. Petri ad Vinc.*)

REPLY. "He" (God by Michael) "buried Moses; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." (Deuteronomy 34:6.) S. Barradas the Jesuit, upon the place, saith, "It is the common opinion of Lyra, Abulensis, Cajetan, and others, that the sepulchre was hid, lest the Israelites, who were inclined to the worship of idols, should worship Moses as God. For they say, that when the devil would for that reason have showed the grave and the body of Moses to the Israelites, St. Michael hindered; and this was the contention spoken of Jude 9." (*Seb. Barrad. Itinerar. Fil. Israel.*)

They could give no greater honor to the body of Moses, than is given to relics in the Church of Rome; and if that was idolatry, and Moses's body was concealed to prevent it, then there is as much reason to think it unlawful now in this case, as it was then in that.

Q. 43. For what cause do they show this regard to relics?

A. By the veneration of them they obtain the help of the saints (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 25, de Invocat.*) whom the relics relate to; and many benefits are thereby conferred by God upon mankind; for by these the dead have been raised, the infirm cured, and devils cast out. (*Catech. Rom., ibid.; Breviar. Rom., ibid.*)

REPLY. We read of Hezekiah, (2 Kings 18:4,) that he “brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made:” And the reason was, because the children of Israel did burn incense to it. The brazen serpent was of God’s own institution; (Numbers 21:8;) by looking up to which, the people were formerly cured. And though it was preserved as a memorial of that divine operation; yet, when abused to idolatry, he cut it in pieces. And were these truly relics of saints, and did work those miracles they pretend, it would be no reason for that reverence and worship they give to them; but the reverence and worship given to them should, according to good King Hezekiah’s practice, be a reason to give them a decent interment.

Q. 44. What kind of reverence or worship is required to be given to images and pictures in the Church of Rome?

A. They kiss them, uncover the head, and fall down, before them; offer incense, and pray to them, and use all such postures of worship as they would do to the person or persons thereby represented, (whether Christ, the virgin Mary, or other saints,) if they were present: And whosoever doth think otherwise, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 25, de Invocat. Catech. Rom.*, par. 4, c. 6, n. 4.) And accordingly, the Priest is to direct the people to them, that they may be worshipped. (*Ut Colantur, Catech. Rom.*, par. 3, c. 2, n. 24)

REPLY. On the contrary, the Second Commandment teaches us, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above,” etc. “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” In which there are two words to be considered: The one, *pesel*, which we rightly translate *graven image*; for it properly signifies any thing carved and cut out of wood or stone; and so it is about forty times rendered in the Greek translation, **γλυπτον**, “a graven thing.” So that an idol and an image are there forbidden. The next word is *themunah*, which doth properly signify a *similitude* or *likeness*, (as is confessed,) and is always so translated. And thus it was understood by the Fathers. So Justin Martyr, when he recites this law, saith, “God forbad *every image and similitude*,” **εικονα και ομοιωμα**. And therefore Cassander grants that the ancient Christians “abhorred all veneration of images.” (*Consult.*, art. 21, *de Imagin.*) Indeed, the command is so express against this

practice, that there has been a kind of self-condemnation in the Church of Rome; whilst they commonly either altogether leave out this Commandment, (*The Child's Catechism*, printed 1678,) or render it imperfectly and by halves: "Thou shalt not make to thee an idol."

Q. 45. What do they profess is their intention in the reverence they give to images and pictures?

A. They declare that the honor given to images and pictures is referred to the prototypes, (*Concil. Trid., ibid.,*) or the persons represented by them, whether God the Father, Christ, angels, or saints; and when they fall down before the image or picture, they worship God, or Christ, the angel, or saint.

REPLY. If an image be a representation of a divine person, and worship be due to the image for the sake of the person represented in it; then, such as the person is, such must the worship be that is due to his image; and what is due to the person, if present, is due to the image in his absence. For to give one honor to the person, and another to the image; a superior to the person, and an inferior to the image; is to terminate the worship in the image, and not pass it from thence to the person, as Gretser, the Jesuit, argues: (*De Cruce*, l. 1, c. 49, sec., *Secundo itaque*;) But if it be to pass from the image unto the person, then we know what they do when they kiss, and uncover their heads, and bow down to, and worship, an image; and have reason to remember the Apostle's advice: "Keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21.)

Q. 46. What regard have they to the material cross or crucifix?

- A.
- (1.) They ascribe peculiar virtue to it, and pray that God would make the wood of the cross to "be the stability of faith, an increase of good works, the redemption of souls." (*Pontificale in Bened. Novae Crucis.*)
 - (2.) They use all expressions of outward adoration, by kissing and prostrations, etc. (*Missale Fer. 6, In Parasc.*)

- (3.) They pray directly to it, to “increase grace in the godly, and blot out the sins of the guilty.” (*Ibid.*, *Sub Ante Domin. Pass. et Fest. Invent. Crucis.*)
- (4.) They give *latria* to it, which is the sovereign worship that is peculiar to God. (*Pontif. Rom. Ordo ad Recep. Imper. Rubr. 1, et Gretser de Cruce, 1. 1, c. 49.*)

REPLY. The Church of Rome, though without any authority from Scripture, (which uses the words promiscuously,) ²⁷ makes a distinction between *latria* and *doulia*: The former is the worship they give to God; the latter the worship they give to saints. Now, they grant, that to give *latria*, or sovereign worship, to any besides God, is idolatry; and that, were not the host the very body and blood of Christ, it would be no less than idolatry to give that honor to the host, which they give to Christ: We understand, then, how to call that worship they give to the cross: They themselves call it *latria*; so we may, by their leave, call it idolatry. For whatever the host is, the cross is but a representation, and not the person worshipped.

Q. 47. Do they think it lawful to represent God and the blessed Trinity by pictures and images, and to worship them?

A. Such pictures are not only almost everywhere received in the Church of Rome, but universally tolerated; (*Bellarm. de Imag.*, 1. 2, c. 8, sec. *Ultimo probatur*;) and are both recommended as expedient for the people (*Concil. Trid.*, *Sess. 25, de Sacr. Imag. Catech. Rom.*, par. 3, c. 2, n. 20,) and proposed to them to be worshipped. (*Cajetan. in Aquin.*, q. 25, art. 3.)

REPLY. There is nothing more expressly forbidden in Scripture, than the making any image or representation of God: “Take ye good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude,) lest ye corrupt yourselves; and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure.” (Deuteronomy 4:15, 16.) If it had been acceptable to God, he would have chosen a similitude to appear in; but seeing he did not, they were not to presume to make one for him. This is to “change his glory.” (Romans 1:21,

etc.) And “to place such an image in a Christian temple is abominable,” saith St. Austin (*De Fide et Symb.*, c. 7.) And “thus to describe the Trinity, is a deformation of it,” saith Cassander. (Art. 21, sec. *de Imag.*)

Q. 48. Upon what pretense do they make such representations of God?

A. They say, they thereby represent not God, but some of his properties and actions, after the manner they are described in Scripture; as when “the Ancient of days” is said to “sit on a throne, having the books opened before him;” (Daniel 7:9, 10;) thereby signifying his eternity and infinite wisdom. (*Catech. Rom.*, *ibid.*)

REPLY. But what is this to those images and pictures used by them which have no resemblance in Scripture? Such are their descriptions of the Trinity in Unity, as of God the father like an old man, having the Son lying in his bosom, and the Holy Ghost over his head like a dove.

(2.) God himself never appeared in any form; and so the resemblance in Daniel was only a prophetic scheme, and did no more belong to God than the eyes and ears that are ascribed to him in Scripture.

(3.) God cannot be represented at all, but by such properties and effects: But if an image of God be forbidden to be worshipped, then the image, even by such properties and effects, is forbidden to be worshipped.

Q. 49. But are not such descriptions of God, the way to represent him, as if he was like unto one of us?

A. Such pictures are not without danger to be exposed to such as cannot read the Scriptures, if they are not taught that they are to be taken metaphorically. (*Bellarmin. de Imag.*, 1. 2, c. 8, sec. *Respondent.*)

REPLY. Cassander saith, “I wish those from whom this information is to be received, were not the authors of these superstitions;” and he adds, “That the teaching is not enough, without the occasions be removed.” (Art. 21, *de Imag.*) This he saith of all images, but more especially of such as are made to represent God.

SECTION IV.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Q. 50. **W**HAT is a sacrament?

ANSWER. A sacrament is a sensible thing which by the institution of God hath a power, as well of causing, as of signifying, holiness and righteousness. (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, cap. 1, n. 11.)

Q. 51. How many sacraments are there in the Church of Rome?

A. There are seven; namely, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony. (*Concil. Trid.*, Sess. 7, Can. 1.)

Q. 52. Is this number determined to be a matter of faith?

A. Whosoever saith, that there are more or fewer than seven instituted by Christ, or that any of the seven are not truly and properly sacraments, is accursed. (*Ibid.*)

REPLY. Cassander saith, that we shall not easily find any before Peter Lombard, who lived about 1139, that did define the number of the sacraments. (Art. 13., sec. *De Num. Sacram.*) And St. Austin is very positive that there are but two of divine institution.²⁸ Now, that there should be sacraments of divine institution, that are neither instituted in the gospel, nor known to be so till 1100 years after our Savior, nor be made a matter of faith till 1500, may be a doctrine received in the Church of Rome, but will not easily be believed by any out of it.

Q. 53. What are the parts of a sacrament?

A. The parts of a sacrament are the matter or element, and the form of words of consecration: So the matter in baptism is water; the form is, “I baptize thee,” etc.

REPLY. That a sacrament should consist of matter and form, and yet either have no form, as confirmation and extreme unction; or have neither matter nor form, of divine institution, as penance and matrimony, is to make them sacraments, and to be none. Our Church rightly affirms of the additional sacraments, they have not any visible sign ordained of God. (Article 25.)

Q. 54. Of what virtue are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments contain the grace which they signify, and confer grace *ex opere operato*, “by the work itself,” upon such as do not put an obstruction. (*Concil. Trid., ibid., can. 6, 8.*) For these sensible and natural things work by the almighty power of God in the sacraments, what they could not do by their own power. (*Catech. Rom., ibid., n. 27.*)

REPLY. It is not sufficient that adult persons have no indisposition to receive the grace of the sacraments; for there is also required a mind well-instructed, a sound belief, and a heart well inclined for that purpose.

(2.) The virtue in the sacraments doth not proceed from the mere elements and words, but from the blessing of God in consequence of his promise to such only as rightly partake of them, and are qualified for it.

Q. 55 What is necessary to a sacrament on the part of those that officiate?

A. It is absolutely necessary, that those that make and consecrate the sacraments have an intention of doing at least what the Church doeth, and doth intend to do. (*Concil. Trid., ibid., can. 11.*)

REPLY. From hence it follows, that if there be no intention, the sacraments are none. And so there is no certainty whether the Priest be a Priest, or whether in the eucharist the elements continue not elements after

consecration, and what is taken for the host be no other than bread. For without the intention, neither is the Priest ordained, nor are the elements consecrated.

OF BAPTISM.

Q. 56. Who may administer the sacrament of baptism?

A. It chiefly belongs to Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; but, in case of necessity, men or women, Jews, infidels, or heretics may do it, if they intend to do what the Church doeth. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 7, De Bapt., can. 4; Catech. Rom., pars 2, c. 2, n. 24.*)

REPLY. Our Savior gave commission to the Apostles and their successors, in the office of the ministry, to “teach all nations, baptizing them.” (Matthew 28:19, 20.) So that women, Jews, and infidels, have no more a power to administer baptism, than they have to teach, or to be Priests.

Q. 57. What ceremonies are used in the administration of baptism in the Church of Rome?

A. Before baptism, there is,

- (1.) Chrism, or oil mixed with water, in the consecration of it. (*Catech., ibid., n. 11, 60.*)
- (2.) Exorcism, composed of certain words, prayers, and actions, for driving away the devil out of the child, and the salt, etc. (*Catech., ibid., n. 65.*) And the Priest is to blow in the face of the child, after the form of a cross, saying, “Go out of him, Satan,” etc. (*Pastorale, Antwerp, 1625.*)
- (3.) The forehead, eyes, breast, etc., are to be crossed, to show that, by the mystery of baptism, the senses are opened to receive God, and to understand his commands. (*Catech., n. 67; Pastor., ibid.*)

- (4.) Then some exorcised salt is to be put into the mouth, to signify a deliverance from the putrefaction of sin, and the savor of good works. (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 66.) And the Priest in putting it into the mouth, saith, “N, take the salt of wisdom, and let it be a propitiation for thee to eternal life. Amen.” (*Pastor., ibid.*)
- (5.) Then the nose and ears are to be anointed with spittle, and then the child is to be brought to the water, as the blind man to Siloam, to signify it brings light to the mind. (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 60.)

After baptism,

- (1.) The Priest anoints the top of the head with chrism; (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 72;) and he adds, “Let him anoint thee with the chrism of salvation.” (*Pastor., ibid.*)
- (2.) He puts a white garment on the baptized, saying, “Take this white garment, which thou mayest bring before the judgment-seat of Christ, that thou mayest have life eternal.” (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 73.)
- (3.) A lighted candle is put into the hand, to show a faith inflamed with charity, and nourished with good works. (*Ibid.*, n. 74.)

REPLY. It is pleaded for these ceremonies, that they are appointed for the majesty of divine worship; and that the benefits contained in the sacraments may be better imprinted on the mind. (*Catech.*, par. 2, c. 2, n. 59.)

But can we think it for the majesty of baptism to have it dressed up like a form of conjuration, that the child must be supposed to be possessed with the devil, and the Priest must blow in his face three times, with, “Get thee out, Satan,” before he can say, “Peace be with thee;” and that he must cross him half a score times, or more, from part to part, in preparation to baptism?

Can we think it for the majesty of it, to have salt exorcised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to be put into the mouth of the child, for a propitiation unto eternal life? Can we think it for the majesty

of this ordinance, that the Priest should put some of his own spittle in his left hand, and then taking it thence with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, touch both ears of the infant, and say, “Ephphatha, be thou opened!” and then his nostrils, and say, “For the odor of sweetness; but thou, O devil, fly;” and then on his right hand, after the manner of a cross, saying, “N, I deliver unto thee the mark of our Lord Jesus Christ, (†)”²⁹ that thou mayest drive the adversary from thee on every side, and have life eternal?”

And what are the benefits imprinted on the mind by these fantastical ceremonies? Or when is it such benefits are promised as these are said to signify? Is it not rather a debasing of it, to have such rites and prayers introduced into it, as signify that which baptism was never appointed for? To give an instance in the salt used in it: —

THE EXORCISM OF THE SALT.

“I exorcise thee, O creature of salt, in the name of the Father (†) Omnipotent, and in the love of our (†) Lord Jesus Christ, and in the virtue of the Holy (†) Spirit. I exorcise thee by the living (†) God, by the true (†) God, by the holy (†) God, who hath created thee for the safeguard of mankind, and hath commanded it to be consecrated by his servants for the people that come to believe, that in the name of the holy Trinity thou beest made a wholesome sacrament to put the enemy to flight. Therefore we pray thee, O our Lord God, that in sanctifying (†) thou dost sanctify this creature of salt, and in blessing (†) thou dost bless it, that it may be a perfect medicine to all that take it.”

OF CONFIRMATION.

Q. 58. Is confirmation a sacrament?

A. It is, properly and truly; and whosoever holds otherwise is accursed.
(*Concil. Trid., Sess. 7, de Confirm., can. 1.*)

REPLY. The Roman Catechism saith, that sacraments cannot be instituted by any but God. (*Catech.*, *ibid.*, n. 6.) And yet the great Schoolman, Alex. Ales, saith, “Christ did not institute nor declare confirmation to be a sacrament.” (Pars 4, q. 4, m. 1.) So by their own confession it is none.

Q. 59. What is the matter of the sacrament of confirmation?

A. The matter is chrism, which is an ointment compounded of oil-olive and balsam, and consecrated by the Bishop (*Cate. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 3, n. 2, 7, 27) upon Monday-Thursday. (*Sum of Christian Doctrine*, London, 1686.)

REPLY. That chrism is either of divine institution, or the matter of a sacrament, may be said, but cannot be proved.

Q. 60. What is the form of consecration?

A. The form is the words used by the Bishop, when he crosses the forehead with the chrism, viz., “I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” (*Catech.*, n. 2, 11.)

REPLY. It is said that Christ instituted the matter and form of confirmation from the authority of Pope Fabian; (pars 4, q. 3, m. 2, n. 3, & q. 9, m. 1;) but Alexander Ales saith, it was ordained by the Meldensian Council. (*Catech. Rom.*, *ibid.*, n. 6, 12, *et Bellarminus de Confirm.*, c. 2.) And indeed the Roman Catechism, after some pretense to divine institution, thinks it safest to resolve it into the authority of the Church.

Q. 61. What ceremonies are used in confirmation?

A.

(1.) In the anointing, the Bishop dips the tip of his finger in the chrism, and, making a cross, saith, “I sign thee,” etc. (*Pontific. de Confirm.*)

- (2.) After confirmation, he strikes the person slightly on the cheek, that he may remember he is to suffer all injuries for the name of Christ, with patience and courage. (*Catech.*, n. 25.)
- (3.) Then the person to be confirmed, setting his foot upon the right foot of the godfather, (*Pontific.*, *ibid.*,) is to have his head bound with a clean headband for some days more or less, with reverence to the holy chrism; which done, the band is to be preserved in the *sacrarium*, or other clean place, till the following Ash-Wednesday, to be burnt to holy ashes. (*Pastorale.*)

REPLY. Whether we consider the far-fetched significations of these ceremonies or the virtue put in them, the abuse is intolerable; as, for instance, that in consecration of the chrism, the Bishop blows upon it, to signify the descent of the Holy Ghost for the sanctification of it, (*Bellarm. de Confirm.*, 1. 2, c. 13, sec. *Tertio habet*,) and that it hath a power of sanctification as the instrument of God. (*Ibid.*, sec. *Quarta caeremonia.*) So the Bishop prays in the consecration of it, that God “in bestowing spiritual grace upon this ointment, would pour out the fullness of sanctification, and that it may be to all that are to be anointed with it, for the adoption of sons by the Holy Spirit. Amen.” (*Pontif. Rom.*)

OF THE EUCHARIST.

Q. 62. What is the eucharist?

A. It is a sacrament wherein is truly, really, and substantially contained whole Christ, God-Man, body and blood, bones and nerves, (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 4, n. 33,) soul and divinity, under the species or appearance of bread and wine. (*Concil. Trid.*, Sess. 13, *de Real. Praes.*, c. 1; *A Sum of Christian Doctrine*, printed 1686.)

Q. How do they attempt to prove this?

A. From the words of our Savior, — “This is my body;” which, say they, clearly demonstrate that the same body which was born of the Virgin, and is now in heaven, is in the sacrament. (*Catech.*, par. 2, c. 4, n. 26.)

Q. 63. What becomes of the bread and wine after consecration?

A. Upon consecration there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of Christ’s body; and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of Christ’s blood; which conversion is usually called transubstantiation. (*Concil. Trid. ibid.*, c. 4; *Concil. Later.*, 4, can. 1.)

REPLY.

- (1.) No such change of the substance of the bread into the substance of Christ’s body, can be inferred from our Savior’s words, “This is my body;” (Matthew 26:26;) for it is not said, “This is *turned* into my body,” but, “This *is* my body;” which, if it be taken literally, would rather prove the substance of the bread to be his body. Therefore Cardinal Cajetan acknowledges, it is nowhere said in the Gospel that the bread is changed into the body of Christ; but they have it from, the authority of the Church. (*Cajet. in Aquin.*, par. 3, q. 75, art. 1.)
- (2.) It is farther evident that the words are not to be taken in their proper sense; for it is called bread as well after consecration as before it. (1 Corinthians 10:17; 11:26-28.) So that what was called his body was also bread at the same time.
- (3.) The mystical relation which the bread by consecration has to Christ’s body is sufficient to give it the name of his body. For it is the usual way of Scripture, to call things of a sacramental nature, by the names of those things they are the figure of. (*Aug. Epist.* 23.) So, circumcision is called the covenant. (Genesis 17:13.) And the killing, dressing, and eating the lamb, is called the passover. (Exodus 12:11.) And after the same manner is the bread in the sacrament Christ’s body; that is, as circumcision was the covenant, and the lamb the passover, by

signification and representation, by type and figure. And so the elements are called by the Fathers, “the images,” (*Orig. Dial. 3, Contr. Marcion.*) “the symbols,” (*Euseb. Dem. Evang. 1. 1, c. 1. et ult.*) “the figure,” (*Aug. contr. Adimant., c. 12.*) of Christ’s body and blood.

Q. 64. What is then that which is seen and tasted in the eucharist?

A. The things seen and tasted are the accidents only of bread and wine; there is the savor, color, and quantity of bread and wine, without any of their substance; but under those accidents there is only the body and blood of Christ. (*Catech. Rom., n. 37, 44.*)

REPLY. Our Savior appealed to the senses of his disciples: “Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” (Luke 24:39.) Take away the certainty of sense, and there is no discerning a body from a spirit; and grant transubstantiation, and we take away the certainty of sense.

Q. 65. Is the body and blood of Christ broken when the host is broken and divided?

A. No, because Christ is impassable; (*Abridgment of Christ. Doctrine, c. 11, sec. Euchar.*;) and, besides, there is whole and entire Christ under either species or element, under the species of bread, and under every particle of it; under the species of wine, and under every drop of it. (*Conc. Trid., ibid., c. 3.*)

REPLY. If every particle of the host is as much the whole body of Christ, as the whole host is before it be divided, then a whole may be divided into wholes; for, divide it and subdivide it, it is still whole. Whole it is before the division, whole it is in the division, and whole it is after it. Thus unreasonable, as well as false, is the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Q. 66. Do they administer the sacrament in both kinds of bread and wine?

A. No; the people are permitted to receive it only in one kind, and are denied the cup. (*Trid., Sess. 21, c. 1.*)

REPLY. It is acknowledged that our Savior instituted and delivered the sacrament in both kinds; (*Concil. Constant., Sess. 13; Trid., Sess. 21, c. 1, 2;*) and that it so continued even in the Church of Rome for above one thousand years after. (*Consult. Cassandri., art. 22.*) And yet with a *non-obstante* to both, they forbid the people to drink of it; and declare, whoever thinks it necessary to receive in both kinds, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., ibid., can. 1.*)

Q. 67. For what reason doth the Church of Rome deprive the people of what our Lord is granted to have instituted?

A. For just and weighty causes, (*Con. Trid., ibid., c. 2,*) such as these:

- (1) Lest the blood of Christ should be spilt upon the ground.
- (2.)Lest the wine, by being kept for the sick, should grow eager.
- (3.)Because many cannot bear the taste or smell of wine.
- (4.)Because in many countries there is such a scarcity of wine, as it is not to be had without great charge and tedious journeys.
- (5.)To disprove those that deny whole Christ to be contained under each species. (*Catech. Rom., ibid., n. 66.*)

REPLY These are the “just and weighty causes” for their overruling the plain precept of our Savior: “Drink ye all of this.” (Matthew 26:27.) And yet whosoever shall say they are not just and sufficient reasons, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., ibid., can. 2.*) As if it was sufficient to forbid wine in the sacrament to all, because some few cannot bear the taste or smell of it; and it was a just cause to deprive all countries of it because some have not wine, or cannot obtain it without difficulty!

Q. 68. What is the mass?

A. In the sacrifice of the mass, the same Christ is contained, and unbloodily offered, who bloodily offered himself upon the altar of the cross. (*Conc. Trid., Sess. 22, can. 1.*)

Q. 69. Of what virtue is the sacrifice in the mass?

A. It is truly a propitiatory sacrifice, and is available, not only for the sins, punishments, and satisfactions of the living, but also for those of the souls in purgatory. (*Ibid.*)

Q. 70. Is this necessary to be believed?

19. Yes; and whosoever denies any of this, is accursed, (*Conc. Trid., Sess. 22, can. 1.*) and incapable of salvation. (*Bulla Pii IV.*)

REPLY. The Scripture when it extols the perfection and infinite value of Christ's sacrifice, doth infer from it, that there needed not therefore any repetition of it: "He needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up sacrifice, etc.; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Hebrews 7:27.) But if the same Christ is offered in the mass as was on the cross, and that unbloody sacrifice is alike propitiatory as the bloody, there is then a repetition of the same sacrifice, and he is daily offered. And what is it to say, the one was bloody and the other is unbloody, when the unbloody is of the same virtue, and is applied to the same end, as the bloody? So that, as, if Christ had again been bloodily offered up, there had been a repetition of that sacrifice; so there is a repetition of it when he is offered up unbloodily. To have then a perfect sacrifice daily repeated, and a sacrifice without suffering, and a propitiation and remission without blood, are alike irreconcilable to the Apostle. (Hebrews 9:22, 25, etc.)

Q. 71. May the Priest communicate alone, though there be none besides to communicate?

A. Yes; the Church of Rome doth approve and commend solitary masses, and accounts them a communion; partly because the people do spiritually

communicate in it, and partly because it is celebrated by a public Minister, not only for himself, but also for the people. (*Conc. Trid., ibid.*, cap. 6.)

REPLY. The Apostle calls the Lord's supper a communion, and saith, "All are partakers of that one bread." (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17.) And Cassander saith, "It cannot properly be a communion unless many partake of it;" and adds from the Council of Nants, that "it is absurd to say, Lift up your hearts, when there is none communicates with the Priest." (*Consult.*, art. 24, *De Solit. Miss.*) And yet the Council of Trent declares, whosoever shall say such masses are unlawful, and to be abrogated, is accursed. (*Sess.* 22, Can. 8.)

Q. 72. What honor is to be given to the consecrated host?

A. *Latria*, or the same sovereign worship which is due only to God; (*Concil. Trid., Sess.* 13, cap. 5;) adore it; (*Missale Rom.*, cap. *Missae*;) pray to it. (*Brev. Rom.*, *Hym. in F. Corp. Ch.*) And whosoever holds it unlawful or idolatrous so to do, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., ibid.*, Can. 6.)

REPLY. We freely own that Christ is to be adored in the Lord's supper; but that the elements are to be adored, we deny. If Christ is not corporally present in the host, they grant their adoration to be idolatry. (*Coster. Enchir.*, c. 8, n. 10.) And that he is not corporally present anywhere but in heaven, we are taught, Acts 1:11, 3:21, whither he went, and where he is to continue till his second coming to judgment.

Q. 73. What are the ceremonies used in the mass?

A. The ceremonies in the mass respect either things, actions, or words. Among the things, are garments, places, time, vessels, cloths, incense, lights, etc. (*Bellarmin. Doctr. Trid. de Sacr. Miss.*)

Q. 74. What are the garments used by the Priest in the mass, and what is their signification?

A.

- (1.)The amice, or white veil, which he puts over his head, signifies mystically, either the divinity of Christ covered under his humanity, or the crown of thorns; and morally, contemplation, or hope. In putting it on, he saith, "Put on, O Lord, the helmet of salvation upon my head, that I may overcome all diabolical temptations."
- (2.)The alb, or long white garment, signifies mystically, the white robe put on our Savior; and morally, faith and innocence. In putting it on, he saith, "Make me white, O Lord, and cleanse my heart, that, being whitened in the blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy everlasting gladness."
- (3.)The girdle signifies mystically, the cords wherewith our Savior was bound; and morally, (being turned up on both sides,) the two means to preserve chastity, namely, fasting and prayer. When he puts it about him, he prays, "Gird me, O Lord, with the girdle of purity, and quench in my loins the humor of lust, that there may remain in me the virtue of continency and chastity." The like account is given of the maniple, vestment, and stole, and of the divers colors of the furniture used in the several seasons, in the "Manual of the Poor Man's Devotion," chap. *Of the Ornaments of the Mass*.

REPLY. The Council of Trent saith, that the ceremonies of the mass, such as mystical benedictions, lights, incensings, garments, etc., are from Apostolical tradition; (*Sess. 22, c. 5;*) or, as others, were instituted by the Holy Ghost; (*Bellarminus, cap. de Sacr. Mis.;*) and that they serve for the majesty of that sacrifice, and to raise the mind to the contemplation of the divine things concealed in it; so none of them are superfluous and vain. (*Catech., par. 2, c. 4, n. 81.*)

But how shall we reconcile this to the numerous crossings and sprinklings, used in the celebration of the mass? For example: When the Priest is clothed with the garments rehearsed before, he comes to the altar; and, standing on the lowest step, just against the middle of it, he makes a profound reverence to the altar and crucifix. Then he ascends, and, having placed the books, etc., in order, he descends to the lowest step, and, turning himself to it, with his hands joined before his breast, and making a

reverence to the altar or crucifix, he begins the mass, standing upright, and drawing with his right hand (his left hand laid on his breast) the sign of the cross from his forehead to his breast. Then he joins his hands before his breast; the Minister standing on his left hand behind him, bowing, saith, *Ad Deum*, etc. Then the Priest, with the Minister, say the psalm, *Judica me*, with *Gloria Patri*, at which he is to bow his head to the cross. Then he repeats the *Introibo*, making with his right hand the sign of the cross from the forehead to the breast. Then he bows his head and body to the altar, and there he stands bowing till the Minister saith, *Misereatur*. When he saith, *Mea culpa*, he smites thrice upon his breast with the right hand; and thus the Missal proceeds in its ceremonies in all the remaining parts of the service.

OF PENANCE.

Q. 75. What is the matter and form of the sacrament of penance?

A. The matter is contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The form is, “I absolve.” (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 5, n. 14, 15.)

REPLY. We are told, that the matter of a sacrament is somewhat sensible; (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 1, n. 11;) then how is penance a sacrament, which has no such matter? For where is the matter that is sensible in contrition? The Council, to avoid this, call it, *Quasi materia*, — “A matter after a sort.” (*Concil. Trid.*, Sess. 14, can. 3.)

Q. 76. What is confession?

A. Confession is a particular discovery of all mortal sins to the Priest, with all their circumstances that increase or diminish the sin, as far as can be called to mind; (*Concil. Trid.*, Sess. 14, c. 5, & *Catech.*, *ibid.*, n. 48;) without which neither forgiveness nor salvation is to be obtained. (*Trid.*, *ibid.*, Can. 6, 7; *Catech.*, n. 44.)

REPLY. We grant confession to men to be in many cases of use; public, in case of public scandal; private, to a spiritual guide for disburdening of the

conscience, and as an help to repentance. But to make auricular confession, or particular confession to a Priest, necessary to forgiveness and salvation, when God has not so made it, is apparently to teach for doctrine the commandment of men; and to make it necessary in all cases, is to make, of what may be a useful means, a dangerous snare, both to the confessor, and those that confess.

Q. 77. Of what kind is the absolution which the Priest grants upon confession?

A. The absolution is not only declarative, but judicial; and the sentence pronounced by the Priest is as if pronounced by the Judge himself; (*Concil. Trid., ibid., c. 6, & Can. 9;*) he perfecting what God causes. (*Catech., par. 2, 5, n. 17.*)

REPLY. To pardon sin, and absolve the sinner judicially, so as the conscience may rest firmly upon it, is a power reserved by God to himself So: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9.) And therefore the authority of the Priest is only ministerial, declarative, and conditional. "Men show a ministry in the forgiveness of sins, but do not exercise a right of power. They pray, but it is God forgives," saith St. Ambrose. (*De Spir., 1. 3, c. 19.*)

Q. 78. What is the benefit of absolution?

A. Although a sinner is not so affected with such grief for his sin, as may be sufficient to obtain pardon; yet, when he has rightly confessed to a Priest, all his sins are pardoned, and an entrance is opened into heaven. (*Catech., ibid., n. 38.*)

REPLY. The grief which is sufficient to obtain pardon, is contrition; and so the grief which is not sufficient to obtain pardon, must be attrition; and the meaning then is, that attrition, with absolution, is as effectual as contrition.

Q. 79. What is satisfaction?

A. It is a compensation made to God, by prayer, fasting, alms, etc., (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 75,) for all sins committed against him; (*Bellarminus de Satisfact.; Bellarm. de Indulg.*, 1. 1, c. 7, sec. *Quarta propositio*;) so that the offender is thereupon purged from the defilement of sin, and discharged from all temporal punishments due to him, either here or in purgatory. (*Catech. Rom., ibid.*, n. 65, 66.)

Q. 80. How do these works become thus satisfactory?

A. They are meritorious and satisfactory, (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 72, 73,) as they are united to the satisfaction of Christ. (*Bellarm. de Forma Satisfact.; Bellarm. de Indulg.*, 1. 1, c. 4, sec. *Respons. non est quidem*.)

REPLY. The giving satisfaction to the Church in case of scandal, and the imposing penances upon notorious offenders, is an useful part of ecclesiastical discipline. But to make that a satisfaction to God which is given to the Church; and to make our works to satisfy, though but as an appendant to the satisfaction of Christ, we can by no means allow. Not the former, because it is derogatory to the justice of God; not the latter, because it is derogatory to the merits of our Savior. For what can make a satisfaction to God, but the obedience and suffering, of his Son? Or what need is there of another satisfaction after that of our Savior? "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14.)

THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

Q. 81. What is the matter of the sacrament of extreme unction?

A. Oil of olive-berries, (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 6, n. 5,) consecrated by a Bishop; which aptly signifies the grace of the Spirit with which the soul of the sick is invisibly anointed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 14, de Extr. Unct.*, c. 1.)

Q. 82. What is the form of it?

A. The form is, “By this holy anointing, God pardon thee, by whatever thou hast offended by the fault of the eyes, nose, or touch.” (*Catech.*, *ibid.*, n. 6.)

Q. 83. What are the parts anointed?

A. The eyes, because of seeing; the ears, because of hearing; the mouth, because of tasting, or speech; the hands, because of touching; the feet, because of motion; the reins, because the seat of lust. (*Catech.*, *ibid.*, n. 10.)

Q. 84. When is this anointing administered?

A. It is to be administered only when persons are supposed to be near the point of death; (*Concil. Trid.*, *ibid.*, c. 3; *Bellarm. Extr. Unct.*, 1. 1, c. 2, sec. *Accedit*;) whence it is called extreme unction. (*Catech.*, *ibid.*, n. 2, 14.)

REPLY. We read, when the twelve Apostles were sent forth, they “anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them;” (Mark 6:13;) making use of that anointing, not as a natural means, but as a mystical sign of the miraculous cure to be wrought by the power of Christ. And as long as this power continued in the Church, so long there was a reason for continuing this rite. Accordingly, the Apostle directs, “Is any sick? Let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick.” (James 5:14,15.) But when the power ceased, there was no reason for the continuance of this sign. And yet this ceremony of anointing is not only continued in the Church of Rome without any pretense to the power, but the nature and the use of it is wholly perverted from what it was in apostolical times. For,

(1.) This rite was then used in curing the sick, but was not necessary to it; for we find them also cured by imposition of hands, (Mark 16:18; Acts 9:17,) or by a word. (Acts 9:34.) But in the Church of Rome it is made absolutely necessary.

- (2.) In apostolical times it was a mere rite; but in the Church of Rome it is made a sacrament, and whosoever saith it is a mere rite is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 14, Can. 1.*)
- (3.) It was used in apostolical times properly for corporal maladies; but in the Church of Rome properly for the soul, and but accidentally for the body. (*Bellarm. de Extr. Unct., l. 1, c. 2, sec. Probo igitur.*)
- (4.) It was used then for the recovery of the sick; but here it is to be applied only to those that are judged to be past it.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF ORDERS.

Q. 85. Is ordination a sacrament?

A. It is truly and properly a sacrament, and doth confer grace; and whose denies this, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess. 7, Can. 1, 23, cap. 3, Can. 3.*)

REPLY. We account ordination to be of divine institution, and that by it a ministerial commission is conveyed; but how necessary soever this office is to the Church, and grace for the exercise of it, yet as that grace is not promised to it, we cannot admit it to be properly and truly a sacrament.

Q. 86. What are the several orders instituted for the service of the Church?

A. The orders always received by the Catholic Church are seven, — the greater and less: The greater are the Priest, Deacon, and Sub-Deacon: The less are the Acolythus, who is to carry the candle and assist the Sub-Deacon; the Exorcist, who is to attend and pray over them that are possessed with the devil; the Reader, and the Ostiarius, or door-keeper. (*Catech., par. 2, c. 7, n. 12, 15, etc.*)

REPLY. We know of no authority there is for any order under a Deacon, so as to anathematize them that do not receive them. (*Concil. Trid., ibid., Can. 2.*) We know of no authority for the forms used in the ordination of those lower orders; as, when the Bishop admits any to that of Exorcists, he reaches to them a book in which the exorcisms are contained, and saith, “Receive, and commit to memory, and take the power of laying on of

hands upon the possessed, or baptized, or catechumens.” (*Catech., ibid.*, n. 17.)

We know of no authority for this kind of procedure, for those forms of conjuration contained in those books, or for the use of those rites therein prescribed, for exorcising persons, houses, cattle, milk, butter, fruits, etc., infested with the devil. (See the *Pastorale Mechlin*, and the *Manual of Exorcisms*, Antwerp, 1626.)

OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE.

Q. 87. Is marriage truly and properly a sacrament?

A. Yes; and whosoever denies it so to be, is accursed. (*Concil. Trid., Sess.* 24, Can. 1.)

REPLY. St. Austin saith, that signs, when applied to religious things, are called sacraments. (*Epist.* 5.) And in this large sense he calls the sign of the cross a sacrament; (*in Psalm.* 141;) and others give the same name to washing the feet, (*Cypr. de Lotione Pedum*;) and many other mysteries. But then matrimony doth no more confer grace, than washing the feet, or using the sign of the cross; which Bellarmine, after all the virtue he ascribes to it, will not allow to be properly and truly a sacrament. (*De Imag.*, 1. 2, c. 30, sec. *Dices ergo*.)

Q. 88. May those that are in holy orders marry, or those that are married be received into orders in the Church of Rome?

A. No; these that; are married may not be admitted; (*Concil. Later.* 1, Can. 21, *et Later.* 2, Can. 6;) those that are admitted may not marry; and those that, being admitted, do marry, are to be separated.

Q. 89. If marriage is a sacrament, and so confers grace, how comes it to be denied to those that are in holy orders? (*Catech. Rom.*, par. 2, c. 8, n. 17.)

A. Those in holy orders are the temple of God, and it is a shameful thing that they should serve uncleanness. (*Later. Concil.* 2, Can. 6.)

REPLY. The Apostle, on the contrary, saith, "Marriage is honorable in all;" (Hebrews 13:4;) and gives a hard character of that doctrine which forbids it. (1 Timothy 4:1-3.) And how lawful it was, the direction of the Apostle about it (1 Timothy 3:2) doth show. And how convenient it is, is manifest from the mischiefs attending the prohibition of it in the Romish Church, which wise men among themselves have lamented. (*Polyd. Virgil. de Invent.*, l. 3, c. 4, *et Cassander Consult.*, art. 23.)

THE CONCLUSION.

I might have added the Fifth Section about the jurisdiction which the Church of Rome challenges over Princes, and about their canonization of saints, their consecration of *Agnus Deis* and beads, etc., and the use these and the like are applied to. I might have further considered their notes of a Church, and showed how many of them are not true, or, however, do not belong to the Church of Rome; but that would be too large a subject to enter upon: And what has been said will be sufficient to show how far that Church hath erred from truth and reason. For if we set their Councils, Missals, Breviaries, Rituals, and Catechisms on one side, and Scripture and antiquity on the other, we shall find their doctrines and practices as well opposite to those as they are opposite to ours; and may be assured that persons may sooner lose their eyes, than find there such a primacy of St. Peter as they contend for, or their Vicarship of the hope, the invocation of saints, the worship of images, service in an unknown tongue, transubstantiation, purgatory, and the rest that we contend against. Scripture and indubitable antiquity are the authority we appeal to; thither we refer our cause; and can heartily conclude with that of Vincentius Lyrin, "That is to be held, which hath been believed everywhere, always, and by all." (*Contr. Haer.*, c. 3.)

A SHORT METHOD

OF

CONVERTING ALL THE ROMAN CATHOLICS IN THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

HUMBLY PROPOSED TO THE BISHOPS AND
CLERGY OF THAT KINGDOM.

1. It is a melancholy consideration to those who love the Protestant interest, that so small a part of this nation is yet reformed from Popery. They cannot observe without a very sensible concern, that, in many parts of the kingdom, there are still ten, nay, fifteen, perhaps upwards of twenty, Papists to one Protestant. Nor can they see any prospect of its being otherwise; few Papists being brought over to our Church, notwithstanding all the methods which have been used, while many Protestants are seduced from it.

2. Yet they cannot; but earnestly desire, that all the Papists were convinced of their errors. How much would this redound to the glory of God, who willeth all to come to the knowledge of his truth! How greatly would it advantage their own souls both in this world and in the world to come! What an advantage would it be to the kingdom in general, to be no longer divided against itself, to have that grand cause of contention removed, and all its inhabitants of one heart and one mind! And how highly would it advance both the honor and interest of our gracious Sovereign, to have all his subjects cordially united together, thinking and speaking the same thing!

3. Why then is not this desirable end pursued with a vigor proportion able to its importance? Is it because we despair of any success, — because we think it impossible to be attained? But why should we imagine it to be

impossible? A common and plausible answer is, Because the Papists are so bigoted to their Clergy; believing all that they affirm, however contrary both to Scripture and reason, and doing all that they direct, whom they generally believe to be the holiest and wisest of men.

4. Undoubtedly this is a considerable difficulty in the way: And yet I cannot think it is unsurmountable. Still I conceive it is possible to convince all the Papists, provided there are proper instruments for the work. And what instruments are so proper as the Clergy? not only as they are in every place, distributed through the whole nation, and always ready on the spot for the work; but likewise as it more immediately belongs to them; as it is no inconsiderable branch of their business who are peculiarly set apart to “watch over the souls of men as they that must give account.”

5. But what way can the Clergy take, with any probability of success? There is one way, and one only; one that will (not probably, but) infallibly succeed. If this way is taken, I am willing to stake my life upon the success of it. And it is a plain, simple way, such as may be taken by any man, though but of a small capacity. For it requires no peculiar depth of understanding, no extraordinary height of learning; but only a share of common sense, and a honest, upright heart.

6. It was observed that the grand difficulty of the work lies, in the strong attachment of the Papists to their Clergy. Here therefore we are to begin; we are to strike at the root; and if this bigotry be but removed, whatever error or superstition is built upon it will of course fall to the ground.

Now, this may be effectually done thus: the Papists themselves allow that one set of Clergy were holier and wiser even than their own, namely, the Apostles; they allow these both to have lived and preached better than the present Clergy even of the Roman Church.

Here, therefore, is the short and sure method. Let all the Clergy of the Church of Ireland only *live* like the Apostles, and *preach* like the Apostles, and the thing is done.

The Romans, on the same ground that they prefer the Apostles before their own Clergy, will then prefer ours before them; and when they once do this, when we have carried this point, when their attachment to our Clergy is stronger than that to their own, they will be convinced by hundreds, till there is not a Roman left in the kingdom of Ireland.

7. If it be asked, But how did the Apostles live and preach? I answer, (not to descend to particulars,) as to their inward life, if I may so speak, they “lived the life which is hid with Christ in God.”

“They were crucified with Christ. Nevertheless they lived; yet not they, but Christ lived in them.” So that each of them could say, “The life which I now live in the flesh,” even in this mortal body, “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

And this faith continually wrought by love, that “love of God” which was “shed abroad in their hearts,” and was a perennial “fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life.”

By this loving faith their hearts were purified from anger, from pride, from all vile affections, from the love of money, of power, of pleasure, of ease, from the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life; all their “affections being set on things above, not on things of the earth.” In a word, that “mind” was “in them which was in Christ Jesus.”

Let but this mind be in every Clergyman of our Church, and Popery will vanish out of the kingdom.

8. As to the outward life of the Apostles, it was, in the general, holy and unblamable in all things. Herein did they exercise themselves day and night, with regard to every word and action, “to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man.” And their continual ground of “rejoicing was this, the testimony of their conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity they had had their conversation in the world.”

They were temperate in all things. They denied themselves, and took up their cross daily. They “kept under their bodies, and brought them into

subjection,” even in the midst of distresses and persecutions, “lest by any means, after they had preached to others, they themselves should have become castaways.”

They were, in every respect, burning and shining lights; they went about doing good as they had opportunity, doing good of every kind, and in every possible degree, to all men. They abstained from all appearance of evil; they overcame evil with good. If their enemy hungered, they fed him; if he thirsted, they gave him drink; and, by patiently continuing so to do, “heaped coals of fire upon his head,” and melted his hardness into love.

In fine, it was their meat and drink to do the will of their Father which was in heaven. And hence whatsoever they did, whether in word or deed, they did all to the glory of God.

Let every Clergyman of our Church live thus, and in a short time there will not be a Papist in the nation.

9. As to the preaching of the Apostles, with regard to the matter of it, they preached Jesus, “the Author and Finisher of our faith,” having “determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.” They preached Jesus Christ as “of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” They declared, “Other foundation” of morality, religion, holiness, happiness, “can no man lay.” All they spoke, either in public or private, centered in this one point, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”

More particularly, they preached that “a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law;” that “to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.”

10. They preached farther, that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” except he be “born from above,” born not only of water, but “of the Holy Ghost;” and that “the” present “kingdom of God is not meats and drinks,” lies not in externals of any kind, “but righteousness,” the image of God on the heart, “peace,” even a peace that

passeth all understanding, “and joy in the Holy Ghost,” whereby they rejoiced with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

They declared “that he that is” thus “born of God doth not commit sin;” that “he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not;” but that as Christ who hath called him is holy, so is he holy in all manner of conversation.

11. As to the manner of their preaching, they spoke with authority, as speaking not their own word, but the word of Him that sent them, and “by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” They were “not as many that cauponize the word of God,” debase and adulterate it with foreign mixtures, “but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, spake they in Christ.” They approved themselves the Ministers of God, “in much patience, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge,” knowing all their flock by name, all their circumstances, all their wants; “by long-suffering, never weary of well-doing, by kindness, by love unfeigned; by the word of truth, by the power of God” attending it, “by the armor of righteousness on the right hand, and on the left.” Hence they were “instant in season, out of season,” being never afraid of the faces of men, never ashamed of Christ or of his words, even before an adulterous and sinful generation. They went on unmoved through “honor and dishonor,” through “evil report and good report.” They regarded not father or mother, or wife or children, or houses or lands, or ease or pleasure; but, having this single end in view, to save their own souls, and those that heard them, they “counted not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might” make full proof of their ministry, so that they might “finish their course with joy, and testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Let all the Right Reverend the Bishops, and the Reverend the Clergy, only walk by this rule, — let them thus live, and thus testify, with one heart and one voice, the gospel of the grace of God, and every Papist within these four seas will soon acknowledge the truth as it is in Jesus.

THE ADVANTAGE

OF THE

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

OVER

THOSE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

I LAY this down as an undoubted truth: — The more the doctrine of any Church agrees with the Scripture, the more readily ought it to be received. And, on the other hand, the more the doctrine of any Church differs from the Scripture, the greater cause we have to doubt of it.

2. Now, it is a known principle of the Church of England, that nothing is to be received as an article of faith, which is not read in the holy Scripture, or to be inferred therefrom by just and plain consequence. Hence it follows, that every Christian has a right to know and read the Scripture, that he may be sure what he hears from his teachers agrees with the revealed word of God.

3. On the contrary, at the very beginning of the Reformation, the Church of Rome began to oppose this principle, that all articles of faith must be provable from Scripture, (till then received throughout the whole Christian world,) and to add, if not prefer, to Holy Scripture, tradition, or the doctrine of Fathers and Councils, with the decrees of Popes. And soon after she determined in the Council of Trent, “that the Old and New Testament, and the traditions of the Church, ought to be received *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia*, ‘with equal piety and reverence;’” and that

“it suffices for laymen if they believe and practice what the Church believes and requires, whether they understand the ground of that doctrine and practice or not.” (*Sess. 4.*)

4. How plain is it that this remedy was found out because they themselves observed that many doctrines, practices, and ceremonies of their Church, not only could not be proved by Scripture, but were flatly contradictory thereto?

As to the Fathers and Councils, we cannot but observe, that in an hundred instances they contradict one another: Consequently, they can no more be a rule of faith to us, than the Papal decrees, which are not grounded on Scripture.

5. But the Church of Rome does not stop here. She not only makes tradition of equal authority with the Scripture, but also takes away the Scripture from the people, and denies them the use of it.

For, soon after, her writers began to teach, yea, and assert in entire volumes, “that the Scripture is obscure, and hard to be understood; that it gives an handle to error and heresies; that it is not a perfect or sufficient rule of life; that it ought to be understood no otherwise than the Church, that is, the Pope, explains it; that, consequently the reading the Scripture is of more hurt than use to the generality of Christians.”

And, in fact, they not only publicly spoke against the reading the Holy Scriptures, but in most countries absolutely forbid the laity to read them, yea, and the Clergy too, till they were ordered to preach.

And if any did read it without a particular license, they condemned and punished it as a great crime.

6. Thus the ease stands to this day; yea, the late controversial in France make it undeniably plain, that the Church of Rome does now labor, more earnestly than ever, to take away the use of the Scriptures, even from those who have hitherto enjoyed them.

Seeing, therefore, the Church of England contends for the word of God, and the Church of Rome against it, it is easy to discern on which side the advantage lies, with regard to the grand principle of Christianity.

7. But that it may more clearly appear how widely the Church of Rome differs from the Holy Scriptures, we have set down a few instances wherein they flatly contradict the written word of God.

Thus the Church of Rome, after acknowledging that the Apostle terms concupiscence sin, yet scruples not to add immediately, “The Catholic Church never understood that this is truly and properly sin; and if any think the contrary, let him be accursed.” (*Conc. Trid., Sess. 5.*)

Thus, although Christ himself says to all his disciples, “Without me ye can do nothing,” yet the Church of Rome condemns this very proposition as false and heretical: — “The grace of Jesus Christ, the effectual principle of all good, is necessary to every good work. Not only nothing good is done without it, but nothing can be done.” (*In the Bull Unigenitus.*)

8. In like manner, the Church of Rome does not scruple to impose upon the consciences of men, in the doctrine of the mass, various traditions, that have no authority from holy writ; and also takes away the up in the Lord’s supper from the laity, contrary to the plain institution of Christ, as well as to the acknowledged custom of the primitive Church. Whence it manifestly appears, that it is not the design of the Roman Church to conform itself to the rule of the written word.

9. Again: The Church of Rome pronounces all those accursed who say, “that baptism, confirmation, the Lord’s supper, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony, are not sacraments instituted by Christ himself; or, that there are more or fewer sacraments than seven; or, that any of these is not truly and properly a sacrament; or, that they do not confer grace barely by the work done.” (*Conc. Trid., Sess 7.*)

Now, whereas these positions cannot be proved by Scripture, and yet are enjoined to be believed under pain of an anathema, it is hence also plain, that the Church of Rome does purposely teach, and also maintain by open

force, things which partly are not founded on holy writ, partly are contrary thereto.

10. As to their sacraments in particular, it is easy to show that they require in each of them such doctrines and customs to be received, as are wholly unsupported by, if not also contrary to, the word of God.

For example: they teach, that in baptism “the right intention of the Minister is so indispensably necessary, that if it be wanting the baptized receives no benefit; that confirmation was a true and proper sacrament from the beginning; (*ibid.*;) that in the Lord’s supper the bread and wine are converted into the natural body and blood of Christ; that every particle of what is consecrated is no longer bread, but the entire body of Christ; that it ought to be worshipped and adored; and that the laity ought not to receive the cup.” (*Sess.* 13, 22.)

In penance: “That a full confession of all our sins to the Priest is absolutely necessary, or they cannot be pardoned; that the penances imposed, (such as pilgrimages, whipping themselves, and the like,) do meritoriously cooperate toward the forgiveness of sins; that this forgiveness is obtained, not through the merits of Christ alone, but also through the merits and intercession of the Virgin Mary and other saints; that extreme unction is a true and proper sacrament instituted by Christ; that the oil blessed by the Bishop eases the soul of the sick, and preserves him from the temptations of the devil;” (*Sess.* 14;) “that ordination is a true and proper sacrament, instituted by Christ; that an indelible character is given thereby; that there were from the beginning those seven orders in the Church, — Priest, Deacon, Sub-Deacon, acolythe, exorcist, reader, and door-keeper; that the proper business of a Priest is, to consecrate and offer the body and blood of Christ, and to remit or retain sins in the chair of confession; that marriage is a true and proper sacrament, instituted by Christ; that, nevertheless, marriage may be dissolved by either party’s entering into a convent, even against the consent of the other; that it is unlawful for any of the Clergy to marry.” (*Sess.* 23.)

11. Now, seeing all these doctrines are unsupported by, if not also contrary to, the word of God, which yet the Church of Rome requires to

be received as true, and pronounces all accursed who do not receive them, we cannot but conclude that the Church of England enjoys an unspeakable advantage over the Church of Rome, with respect to her doctrines, which are wholly agreeable to, and founded on, the written word of God.

12. The advantage of the Church of England over the Church of Rome is equally great with regard to public worship.

For it is manifest that the public worship of the Roman Church is wholly degenerated from the nature of Christ's kingdom and the simplicity of the first Christians: That at present it consists in magnificent buildings, altars, images, ornaments, and habits; in splendid ceremonies; in processions and pilgrimages, and prayers in an unknown tongue; and in reciting the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ave-Maria, over and over, according to the number of their beads: That they are not instructed to "worship God in spirit and in truth," as their loving and most beloved Father; and to praise him, and comfort one another, with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs: That their souls are not edified by sermons and catechizing out of the word of God, the Scriptures being cited very sparingly in their sermons, and generally in a strained and allegorical sense: That they are not permitted to search the Scriptures at home, and seek food for their souls therein: That the common people are by this means purposely kept in the grossest ignorance and superstition.

13. It is manifest also that they are held in doubt as to the salvation both of the living and the dead, by the doctrine of purgatory; that hereby the minds of those who want to be assured of the state of their souls, are disquieted and disturbed; that pardon of sins, release from punishment due thereto, and redemption from purgatory by masses and indulgences, either for the living or dead, are daily sold for money.

14. It is no less manifest that their trust in Christ alone, the one Mediator between God and man, is hindered so much the more, the more the people are referred to the merits and intercession of the blessed Virgin, and other saints; the more they are taught to adore their images and relics; to make vows to them, and to implore their help in any trouble; yea, and to place therein a very considerable part of their worship and devotion; as well as

in a bare outward observance of saints' days, and other festivals of the Church, and in the abstaining, from some particular kinds of meat on what they call fast-days.

15. All these practices, wholly unsupported by Scripture, the Church of Rome retains to this day; at the same time that she rejects and pronounces accursed all (whether practices or doctrines) that make against her, be they ever so plainly contained in, and grounded on, the word of God.

Our Reformers seeing this, judged it needful to inquire whether it could be proved by holy writ that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter; that he is Christ's Vicar upon earth, and the visible head of the Church; that he has a right of interpreting the word of God according to his own pleasure; to introduce and prohibit doctrines, besides and against the written word; to license things which the Scripture forbids; to exercise a spiritual, and in many cases a secular, power over all Christians, — Kings and Emperors not excepted; to anathematize all that oppose his will, depose Princes, and absolve subjects from their allegiance; to pronounce heretics, to curse, kill, torture, and burn alive, all who do not submit to him in every point.

16. Some of the reasons they had to doubt of these things were those which follow: —

That neither St. Peter, nor any of the ancient Bishops, had the same doctrine or manner of governing the Church which the Bishop of Rome now has, as is clear both from the Epistles of St. Peter, from the Acts of the Apostles, and the ancient ecclesiastical history; that Christ alone "is made of God Head over all things to the Church," (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18,) who is "with them always, even to the end of the world;" that the kingdom of Christ, being not of this world, bears no resemblance to the hierarchy and monarchy of the Papal kingdom; that the possessing the See of Rome no more proves the Pope to be the successor of St. Peter, than the possessing the city of Constantinople proves the Great Turk to be the successor of Constantine the Great; that if the Pope were the Vicar of Christ, (which is not yet proved,) still he would have no authority to change or abrogate the laws of his Lord and King; much less

to make laws just contrary to them, or to exempt any from obeying the laws of Christ; that attempts of this kind denote all adversary, rather than a faithful and upright Vicar, of Christ.

17. They doubt of these things the more, because the primitive Church knew of no such thing as an universal head; because no Bishop was acknowledged as such at the time of the Council of Nice; because Gregory the Great declared, he should account any man to be antichrist who called himself by such a title; because it is apparent, that Boniface III., the next Pope but one to him, about the year 606, was the first to whom the title of universal Bishop was given, as a reward for his absolving the tyrant Phocas, after he had murdered his master, the Emperor Mauritius, with his Empress, and eight children; because the succeeding Popes acquired one part of their power after another, by various methods, either of fraud or force; because many of them have been notoriously wicked men, and encouragers of all manner of wickedness; notwithstanding all which, men are required to believe that they are all enlightened by the Holy Ghost, in so extraordinary a manner as to be rendered infallible; although one Pope is continually contradicting another, and reversing the decrees which his predecessors had most solemnly established.

18. When the Romanists are desired to prove by Scripture, that the Pope is the head of the Church, they urge, that Christ said to St. Peter,

(1.) "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

(2.) "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." Therefore we answer, These texts by no means prove that Christ made St. Peter himself his Vicar; much less that he gave that dominion to the Pope, which he now usurps over the consciences of men. And hence we are the more clearly convinced, that the papal power is not of divine original; and that we have great cause to bless God, whom the Pope has excluded from his communion, and thereby restored to that unshaken liberty of conscience wherein, by the grace of God, we shall always stand.

19. In this liberty every member of our Church, if he gives himself up to the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, may learn the foundation of his faith from the written word of God; may read and meditates therein day and night; may devoutly pray in the Spirit of adoption, like the holy men of

ancient times; may comfort and quicken himself and others, with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; may enjoy all the ordinances of Christ, according to his own institution; may be assured of the remission of his sins, and of his justification through faith in Christ, the Spirit of God witnessing with his spirit that he is a child of God; may study to have a conscience void of offense, both toward God and toward man: He may freely enjoy every blessing which God hath bestowed upon our own Church; and may make advantage of whatever good the providence of God has still preserved in the Church of Rome: He may cheerfully look for a happy death, and a blessed eternity; and at length, by resting on Christ alone, and patiently partaking of his sufferings, he may, with certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life, without any fear either of purgatory or hell, resign his spirit into the hand of God, and so be ever with the Lord.

POPERY CALMLY CONSIDERED.

TO THE READER.

In the following Tract, I propose, First, to lay down and examine the chief doctrines of the Church of Rome: Secondly, to show the natural tendency of a few of those doctrines; and that with all the plainness and all the calmness I can.

SECTION I.

OF THE CHURCH AND THE RULE OF FAITH.

1. THE Papists judge it necessary to salvation, to be subject to the Pope, as the one visible head of the Church.

But we read in Scripture, that Christ is the Head of the Church, “from whom the whole body is fitly joined together.” (Colossians 2:19.) The Scripture does not mention any visible head of the Church; much less does it mention the Pope as such; and least of all does it say, that it is necessary to salvation to be subject to him.

2. The Papists say, The Pope is Christ’s Vicar, St. Peter’s successor, and has the supreme power on earth over the whole Church.

We answer, Christ gave no such power to St. Peter himself. He gave no Apostle pre-eminence over the rest. Yea, St. Paul was so far from acknowledging St. Peter’s supremacy, that he withstood him to the face, (Galatians 2:11,) and asserted himself “not to be behind the chief of the Apostles.”

Neither is it certain, that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome; no, nor that he ever was there.

But they say, “Is not Rome the mother, and therefore the mistress, of all Churches?”

We answer, No. “The word of the Lord went forth from Jerusalem.” There the Church began. She, therefore, not the Church of Rome, is the mother of all Churches.

The Church of Rome, therefore, has no right to require any person to believe what she teaches on her sole authority.

3. St. Paul says, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable; for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

The Scripture, therefore, being delivered by men divinely inspired, is a rule sufficient of itself: So it neither needs, nor is capable of, any farther addition.

Yet the Papists add tradition to Scripture, and require it to be received with equal veneration. By traditions, they mean, “such points of faith and practice as have been delivered down in the Church from hand to hand without writing.” And for many of these, they have no more Scripture to show, than the Pharisees had for their traditions.

4. The Church of Rome not only adds tradition to Scripture, but several entire books; namely, Tobit and Judith, the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the two books of Maccabees, and a new part of Esther and of Daniel; “which whole books,” says the Church of Rome, “whoever rejects, let him be accursed.”

We answer, We cannot but reject them. We dare not receive them as part of the Holy Scriptures. For none of these books were received as such by

the Jewish Church, “to whom were committed the oracles of God:” (Romans 3:2:) Neither by the ancient Christian Church, as appears from the 60th Canon of the Council of Laodicea; wherein is a catalogue of the books of Scriptures, without any mention of these.

5. As the Church of Rome, on the one hand, adds to the Scripture, so, on the other hand, she forbids the people to read them. Yea, they are forbid to read so much as a summary or historical compendium of them in their own tongue.

Nothing can be more inexcusable than this. Even under the law, the people had the Scriptures in a tongue vulgarly known; and they were not only permitted, but required, to read them; yea, to be constantly conversant therein. (Deuteronomy 6:6, etc.) Agreeable to this, our Lord commands to search the Scriptures; and St. Paul directs, that his Epistle be read in all the Churches (1 Thessalonians 5:27.) Certainly this Epistle was wrote in a tongue which all of them understood.

But they say, “If people in general were to read the Bible, it would do them more harm than good.” Is it any honor to the Bible to speak thus? But supposing some did abuse it, is this any sufficient reason for forbidding others to use it? Surely no. Even in the days of the Apostles, there were some “unstable and ignorant men,” who wrested both St. Paul’s Epistles, and the other Scriptures, “to their own destruction.” But did any of the Apostles, on this account, forbid other Christians to read them? You know they did not: They only cautioned them not to be “led away by the error of the wicked.” And certainly the way to prevent this is, not to keep the Scriptures from them; (for “they were written for our learning;”) but to exhort all to the diligent perusal of them, lest they should “err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

6. “But seeing the Scripture may be misunderstood, how are we to judge of the sense of it? How can we know the sense of any scripture, but from the sense of the Church?”

We answer,

- (1.)The Church of Rome is no more the Church in general, than the Church of England is. It is only one particular branch of the catholic or universal Church of Christ, which is the whole body of believers in Christ, scattered over the whole earth.
- (2.)We therefore see no reason to refer any matter in dispute to the Church of Rome, more than any other Church; especially as we know, neither the Bishop nor the Church of Rome is any more infallible than ourselves.
- (3.)In all cases, the Church is to be judged by the Scripture, not the Scripture by the Church. And Scripture is the best expounder of Scripture. The best way, therefore, to understand it, is carefully to compare Scripture with Scripture, and thereby learn the true meaning of it.

SECTION II.

OF REPENTANCE AND OBEDIENCE.

1. THE Church of Rome teaches, that “the deepest repentance or contrition avails nothing without confession to a Priest; but that, with this, attrition, or the fear of hell, is sufficient to reconcile us to God.”

This is very dangerously wrong, and flatly contrary to Scripture; for the Scripture says, “A broken and contrite heart, thou, O God, wilt not despise.” (Psalm 51:17.) And the same texts which make contrition sufficient without confession, show that attrition even with it is insufficient. Now, as the former doctrine, of the insufficiency of contrition without confession, makes that necessary which God has not made necessary; so the latter, of the sufficiency of attrition with confession, makes that unnecessary which God has made necessary.

2. The Church of Rome teaches, that “good works truly merit eternal life.”

This is flatly contrary to what our Savior teaches: “When ye have done all those things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: We have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:10.) A command to do it, grace to obey that command, “and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” must forever cut off all pretense of merit from all human obedience.

3. That a man may truly and properly merit hell, we grant; although he never can merit heaven. But if he does merit hell, yet, according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, he need never go there. For “the Church has power to grant him an indulgence, which remits both the fault and the punishment.”

Some of these indulgences extend only to so many days; some, to so many weeks; but others extend to a man's whole life; and this is called a plenary indulgence.

These indulgences are to be obtained by going pilgrimages, by reciting certain prayers, or (which is abundantly the most common way) by paying the stated price of it.

Now, can anything under heaven be imagined more horrid, more execrable than this? Is not this a manifest prostitution of religion to the basest purposes? Can any possible method be contrived, to make sin more cheap and easy? Even the Popish Council of Trent acknowledged this abuse, and condemned it in strong terms; but they did not in any degree remove the abuse which they acknowledged. Nay, two of the Popes under whom the Council sat, Pope Paul III., and Julius III., proceeded in the same course with their predecessors, or rather exceeded them; for they granted to such of the Fraternity of the Holy Altar as visited the Church of St. Hilary of Chartres during the six weeks of Lent, seven hundred and seventy-five thousand seven hundred years of pardon.

4. This miserable doctrine of indulgences is founded upon another bad doctrine, that of works of supererogation; for the Church of Rome teaches, that there is "an overplus of merit in the saints; and that this is a treasure committed to the Church's custody, to be disposed as she sees meet."

But this doctrine is utterly irreconcilable with the following scriptures: — "The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;" (Romans 8:18;) and "Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12.) For if there be no comparison betwixt the reward and the sufferings, then no one has merit to transfer to another; and if every one must give an account of himself to God, then no one can be saved by the merit of another. But suppose there were a superabundance of merits in the saints, yet we have no need of them, seeing there is such an infinite value in what Christ hath done and suffered for us; seeing He alone hath "by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10: 14.)

5. But where do the souls of those go after death, who die in a state of grace, but yet are not sufficiently purged from sin to enter into heaven?

The Church of Rome says, “They go to purgatory, a purging fire near hell, where they continue till they are purged from all their sins, and so made meet for heaven.”

Nay, that those who die in a state of grace, go into a place of torment, in order to be purged in the other world, is utterly contrary to Scripture. Our Lord said to the penitent thief upon the cross, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Now, if a purgation in another world were necessary for any, he that did not repent and believe till the last hour of his life might well be supposed to need it; and consequently ought to have been sent to purgatory, not to paradise.

6. Very near akin to that of purgatory, is the doctrine of *Limbus Patrum*. For the Church of Rome teaches, that “before the death and resurrection of Christ, the souls of good men departed were detained in a certain place, called *Limbus Patrum*, which is the uppermost part of hell.” “The lowermost,” they say, “is the place of the damned; next above this is purgatory; next to that, *Limbus Infantum*, or the place where the souls of infants are.”

It might suffice to say, there is not one word of all this in Scripture. But there is much against it. We read that Elijah was taken up into heaven; (2 Kings 2:11;) and he and Moses “appeared in glory.” (Luke 9:31.) And Abraham is represented as in paradise, (Luke 16:22,) the blessed abode of good men in the other world. Therefore, none of these were in the *Limbus Patrum*. Consequently, if the Bible is true, there is no such place.

SECTION III.

OF DIVINE WORSHIP.

1. THE service of the Roman Church consists of prayers to God, angels, and saints; of Lessons, and of Confessions of Faith.

All their service is everywhere performed in the Latin tongue, which is now here vulgarly understood. Yea, it is required; and a curse is denounced against all those who say it ought to be performed in the vulgar tongue.

This irrational and unscriptural practice destroys the great end of public worship. The end of this is, the honor of God in the edification of the Church. The means to this end is, to have the service so performed as may inform the mind and increase devotion. But this cannot be done by that service which is performed in an unknown tongue.

What St. Paul judged of this is clear from his own words: “If I know not the meaning of the voice,” (of him that speaks in a public assembly,) “he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me.” (1 Corinthians 14:11.) Again: “If thou shalt bless by the Spirit,” (by the gift of an unknown tongue,) “how shall the unlearned say Amen?” (Verse 16.) How can the people be profited by the Lessons, answer at the Responses, be devout in their Prayers, confess their faith in the Creeds, when they do not understand what is read, prayed, and confessed? It is manifest, then, that the having any part of divine worship in an unknown tongue is as flatly contrary to the word of God as it is to reason.

2. From the manner of worship in the Church of Rome, proceed we to the objects of it. Now, the Romanists worship, besides angels, the Virgin Mary and other saints. They teach that angels, in particular, are to be “worshipped, invoked, and prayed to.” And they have Litanies and other Prayers composed for that purpose.

In flat opposition to all this, the words of our Savior are, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” To evade this, they say, “The worship we give to angels is not the same kind with that which we give to God.” Vain words! What kind of worship is peculiar to God, if prayer is not? Surely God alone can receive all our prayers, and give what we pray for. We honor the angels, as they are God’s Ministers; but we dare not worship or pray to them; it is what they themselves refuse and abhor. So, when St. John “fell down at the feet of the angel to worship him, he said, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant: Worship God.” (Revelations 19:10.)

3. The Romanists also worship saints. They pray to them as their intercessors; they confess their sins to them; they offer incense and make vows to them. Yea, they venerate their very images and relics.

Now, all this is directly contrary to Scripture. And, First, the worshipping, them as intercessors. For, as “there is but one God to us, though there are gods many, and lords many;” so, according to Scripture, there is but one Intercessor or Mediator to us. (1 Corinthians 8:5, 6.) And suppose the angels or saints intercede for us in heaven; yet may we no more worship them, than, because “there are gods many on earth,” we may worship them as we do the true God.

The Romanists allow, “There is only one Mediator of redemption;” but say, “There are many mediators of intercession.” We answer, The Scripture knows no difference between a mediator of intercession and of redemption. He alone “who died and rose again” for us, makes intercession for us at the right hand of God. And he alone has a right to our prayers; nor dare we address them to any other.

4. The worship which the Romanists give to the Virgin Mary, is beyond what they give either to angels or other saints. In one of their public offices, they say, “Command thy Son by the right of a mother.” They pray to her to “loose the bands of the guilty, to bring light to the blind, to make them mild and chaste, and to cause their hearts to burn in love to Christ.”

Such worship as this cannot be given to any creature, without gross, palpable idolatry. We honor the blessed Virgin as the mother of the Holy Jesus, and as a person of eminent piety: But we dare not give worship to her; for it belongs to God alone.

Meantime, we cannot but wonder at the application which the Church of Rome continually makes to her, of whose acts on earth the Scripture so sparingly speaks. And it says nothing of what they so pompously celebrate, her assumption into heaven, or of her exaltation to a throne above angels or archangels. It says nothing of her being “the mother of grace and mercy, the Queen of the gate of heaven,” or of her “power to destroy all heresies,” and bring “all things to all.”

5. The Romanists pay a regard to the relics of the saints also; which is a kind of worship. By relics, they mean the bodies of the saints, or any remains of them, or particular things belonging or relating to them when they were alive; as an arm or thigh, bones or ashes; or the place where, or the things by which, they suffered. They venerate these, in order to obtain the help of the saints. And they believe, “by these many benefits are conferred on mankind; that by these relics of the saints, the sick have been cured, the dead raised, and devils cast out.”

We read of good King Hezekiah, that “he brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made.” (2 Kings 18:4.) And the reason was, because the children of Israel burnt incense to it. By looking up to this, the people bitten by the fiery serpents had been healed. And it was preserved from generation to generation, as a memorial of that divine operation. Yet, when it was abused to idolatry, he ordered it to be broke in pieces. And were these true relics of the saints, and did they truly work these miracles, yet that would be no sufficient cause for the worship that is given them. Rather, this worship would be a good reason, according to Hezekiah’s practice, for giving them a decent interment.

6. Let us next consider what reverence the Church of Rome requires to be given to images and pictures. She requires “to kiss them, to uncover the head, to fall down before them, and use all such postures of worship as they would do to the persons represented, if present.” And accordingly,

“the Priest is to direct the people to them, that they may be worshipped.” They say, indeed, that, in falling down before the image, they “worship the saint or angel whom it represents.” We answer,

(1.) We are absolutely forbidden in Scripture to worship saints or angels themselves.

(2.) We are expressly forbidden “to fall down and worship any image or likeness of anything in heaven or earth,” whomsoever it may represent. This, therefore, is flat idolatry, directly contrary to the commandment of God.

7. Such, likewise, without all possibility of evasion, is the worship they pay to the cross. They pray that God may make the wood of the cross to “be the stability of faith, an increase of good works, the redemption of souls.” They use all expressions of outward adoration, as kissing, and falling down before it. They pray directly to it, to “increase grace in the ungodly, and blot out the sins of the guilty.” Yea, they give *latría* to it. And this, they themselves say, “is the sovereign worship that is due only to God.”

But indeed they have no authority of Scripture for their distinction between *latría* and *dulia*; the former of which they say is due to God alone, the latter that which is due to saints. But here they have forgotten their own distinction. For although they own *latría* is due only to God, yet they do in fact give it to the cross. This then, by their own account, is flat idolatry.

8. And so it is to represent the blessed Trinity by pictures and images, and to worship them. Yet these are made in every Romish country, and recommended to the people to be worshipped; although there is nothing more expressly forbidden in Scripture, than to make any image or representation of God. God himself never appeared in any bodily shape. The representation of “the Ancient of days,” mentioned in Daniel, was a mere prophetic figure; and did no more literally belong to God, than the eyes or ears that are ascribed to him in Scripture.

SECTION IV.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. THE Church of Rome says, “A sacrament is a sensible thing, instituted by God himself, as a sign and a means of grace.

“The sacraments are seven: Baptism, confirmation, the Lord’s supper, penance, extreme unction, orders, and marriage.

“The parts of a sacrament are, the matter, and the form, or words of consecration. So in baptism, the matter is water; the form, ‘I baptize thee,’” etc.

On this we remark, Peter Lombard lived about one thousand one hundred and forty years after Christ. And he was the first that ever determined the sacraments to be seven. St. Austin (a greater than he) positively affirms, “that there are but two of divine institution.”

Again: To say that a sacrament consists of matter and form, and yet either has no form, as confirmation and extreme unction, (neither of which is ever pretended to have any form of words, instituted by God himself,) or has neither matter nor form, as penance or marriage, is to make them sacraments and no sacraments. For they do not answer that definition of a sacrament which themselves have given.

2. However, they teach that “all these seven confer grace *ex opere operato*, by the work itself, on all such as do not put an obstruction.” Nay, it is not enough that we do not put an obstruction. In order to our receiving grace, there is also required previous instruction, true repentance, and a degree of faith; and even then the grace does not spring merely *ex opere operato*: It does not proceed from the mere elements, or the words spoken; but from the blessing of God, in consequence of his promise to such as are qualified for it.

Equally erroneous is that doctrine of the Church of Rome, that, “in order to the validity of any sacrament, it is absolutely necessary the person who administers it should do it with an holy intention.” For it follows, that, wherever there is not this intention, the sacrament is null and void. And so there is no certainty whether the Priest, so called, be a real Priest; for who knows the intention of him that ordained him? And if he be not, all his ministrations are of course null and void. But if he be, can I be sure that his intention was holy, in administering the baptism or the Lord’s supper? And if it was not, they are no sacraments at all, and all our attendance on them is lost labor.

3. So much for the sacraments in general: Let us now proceed to particulars: —

“Baptism,” say the Romanists, “may, in case of necessity, be administered by women, yea, by Jews, infidels, or heretics.” No; our Lord gave this commission only to the Apostles, and their successors in the ministry.

The ceremonies which the Romanists use in baptism are these: —

Before baptism,

- (1.) Chrism; that is, oil mixed with water is to be consecrated.
- (2.) Exorcism; that is, the Priest is to blow in the face of the child, saying, “Go out of him, Satan!”
- 3.) He crosses the forehead, eyes, breast, and several other parts of the body.
- (4.) He puts exorcised salt into his mouth, saying, “Take the salt of wisdom.”
- (5.) He puts spittle in the palm of his left hand, puts the forefinger of his right hand into it, and anoints the child’s nose and ears therewith, who is then brought to the water.

After baptism, First, he anoints the top of the child’s head with chrism, as a token of salvation: Secondly, he puts on him a white garment, in token of

his innocence: And, Thirdly, he puts a lighted candle into his hand, in token of the light of faith.

Now, what can any man of understanding say in defense of these idle ceremonies, utterly unknown in the primitive Church, as well as unsupported by Scripture? Do they add dignity to the ordinance of God? Do they not rather make it contemptible?

4. The matter of confirmation is the chrism; which is an ointment consecrated by the Bishop. The form is the words he uses in crossing the forehead with the chrism; namely, “I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Then the person confirmed, setting his right foot on the right foot of his godfather, is to have his head bound with a clean headband; which, after some days, is to be taken off, and reserved till the next Ash-Wednesday, to be then burnt to holy ashes.

The Roman Catechism says, “Sacraments cannot be instituted by any beside God.” But it must be allowed, Christ did not institute confirmation; therefore it is no sacrament at all.

5. We come now to one of the grand doctrines of the Church of Rome, — that which regards the Lord’s supper. This, therefore, we would wish to consider with the deepest attention. They say, “In the Lord’s supper whole Christ is really, truly, and substantially contained; God-Man, body and blood, bones and nerves, under the appearance of bread and wine.”

They attempt to prove it thus: “Our Lord himself says, ‘This is my body.’ Therefore, upon consecration there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the whole substance of Christ’s body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood; and this we term transubstantiation.

“Yet we must not suppose that Christ is broken, when the host, or consecrated bread, is broken; because there is whole and entire Christ,

under the species of every particle of bread, and under the species of every drop of wine.”

We answer: No such change of the bread into the body of Christ can be inferred from his words, “This is my body.” For it is not said, “This is *changed* into my body,” but, “This *is* my body;” which, if it were to be taken literally, would rather prove the substance of the bread to be his body. But that they are not to be taken literally is manifest from the words of St. Paul, who calls it bread, not only before, but likewise after, the consecration. (1 Corinthians 10:17; 11:26-28.): Here we see, that what was called his body, was bread at the same time. And accordingly these elements are called by the Fathers, “the images, the symbols, the figure, of Christ’s body and blood.”

Scripture and antiquity, then, are flatly against transubstantiation. And so are our very senses. Now, our Lord himself appealed to the senses of his disciples: “Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” (Luke 24:39.) Take away the testimony of our senses, and there is no discerning a body from a spirit. But if we believe transubstantiation, we take away the testimony of all our senses.

And we give up our reason too: For if every particle of the host is as much the whole body of Christ as the whole host is before it is divided, then a whole may be divided, not into parts, but into wholes. For divide and subdivide it over and over, and it is whole still! It is whole before the division, whole in the division, whole after the division! Such nonsense, absurdity, and self-contradiction all over is the doctrine of transubstantiation!

6. An evil practice attending this evil doctrine is, the depriving the laity of the cup in the Lord’s supper. It is acknowledged by all, that our Lord instituted and delivered this sacrament in both kinds; giving the wine as well as the bread to all that partook of it; and that it continued to be so delivered in the Church of Rome for above a thousand years. And yet, notwithstanding this, the Church of Rome now forbids the people to drink of the cup! A more insolent and barefaced corruption cannot easily be conceived!

Another evil practice in the Church of Rome, utterly unheard of in the ancient Church, is, that when there is none to receive the Lord's supper, the Priest communicates alone. (Indeed it is not properly to communicate, when one only receives it.) This likewise is an absolute innovation in the Church of God.

But the greatest abuse of all in the Lord's supper is, the worshipping the consecrated bread. And this the Church of Rome not only practices, but positively enjoins. These are her words: "The same sovereign worship which is due to God, is due to the host. Adore it; pray to it. And whosoever holds it unlawful so to do, let him be accursed."

The Romanists themselves grant, that if Christ is not corporally present in the Lord's supper, this is idolatry. And that he is not corporally present anywhere but in heaven, we learn from Acts 1:11; 3:21. Thither he went, and there he will continue, "till the time of the restitution of all things."

7. Consider we now what the Romanists hold, concerning the sacrament of penance.

"The matter of the sacrament of penance is, contrition, confession, and satisfaction; the form, 'I absolve thee.'"

We object to this: You say, "The matter of a sacrament is something sensible," perceivable by our senses. But if so, penance is not a sacrament. For surely contrition is not something perceivable by the outward senses!

Again: They say, "Confession is a particular discovery of all mortal sins to a Priest, with all their circumstances, as far as they can be called to mind; without which there can be no forgiveness or salvation."

We answer: Although it is often of use to confess our sins to a spiritual guide, yet to make confessing to a Priest necessary to forgiveness and salvation, is "teaching for doctrines the commandment of men." And to make it necessary in all cases is to lay a dangerous snare both for the Confessor and the confessed.

They go on: "The sentence pronounced by the Priest in absolution, is pronounced by the Judge himself. All the sins of the sinner are thereby pardoned, and an entrance opened into heaven."

We cannot allow it. We believe the absolution pronounced by the Priest is only declarative and conditional. For judicially to pardon sin and absolve the sinner, is a power God has reserved to himself.

Once more: You say, "Satisfaction is a compensation made to God by alms, etc., for all offenses committed against him."

We answer,

- (1.) It cannot be that we should satisfy God, by any of our works. For,
- (2.) Nothing can make satisfaction to Him, but the obedience and death of his Son.

8. We proceed to what they call "the sacrament of extreme unction." "The matter," they say, "of extreme unction is, oil consecrated by the Bishop, and applied to the eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, and reins of a person supposed to be near death." The form is "By this holy anointing, God pardon thee for whatever thou hast offended by the eyes, ears, mouth, or touch."

We reply: When the Apostles were sent forth, "they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them;" (Mark 6:13;) using this as a sign of the miraculous cures to be wrought. And St. James accordingly directs: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the Church; let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick." (v. 14, 15.) But what has this to do with the extreme unction of the church of Rome? In the first Church, this anointing was a mere rite: In the Church of Rome, it is made a sacrament! It was used in the first Church for the body; it is used in the Church of Rome for the soul: It was used then for the recovery of the sick; now, for those only that are thought past recovery. It is easy, therefore, to see, that the Romish extreme unction was no foundation in Scripture.

9. We are now to consider what the Church of Rome delivers concerning ordination. “This,” says she, “is properly a sacrament. He that denies it, let him be accursed.”

“The orders received in the Church of Rome are seven: The Priest, the Deacon, the Subdeacon, the Acolythus, to carry the candle; the Exorcist, to cast out devils; the Reader, and Door-keeper.”

On this, we observe, It is not worth disputing, whether ordination should be called a sacrament or not. Let the word then pass: But we object to the thing; there is no divine authority for any order under a Deacon. Much less is there any Scriptural authority for the forms of conjuration prescribed to the Exorcists; or for the rites prescribed in exorcising not only men, women, and children, but likewise houses, cattle, milk, butter, or fruits, said to be infested with the devil.

10. The next of their sacraments, so called, is marriage; concerning which they pronounce, “Marriage is truly and properly a sacrament. He that denies it so to be, let him be accursed.”

We answer, In one sense it may be so. For St. Austin says, “Signs, when applied to religious things, are called sacraments.” In this large sense, he calls the sign of the cross a sacrament; and others give this name to washing the feet. But it is not a sacrament according to the Romish definition of the word; for it no more “confers grace,” than washing the feet or signing with the cross.

A more dangerous error in the Church of Rome is, the forbidding the Clergy to marry. “Those that are married may not be admitted into orders: Those that are admitted may not marry: And those that, being admitted, do marry, are to be separated.”

The Apostle, on the contrary, says, “Marriage is honorable in all;” (Hebrews 13:4;) and accuses those who “forbid to marry,” of teaching “doctrines of devils.” How lawful it was for the Clergy to marry, his directions concerning it show. (1 Timothy 4:1, 3.) And how convenient, yea, necessary, in many cases it is, clearly appears from the innumerable

mischiefs which have in all ages followed the prohibition of it in the Church of Rome; which so many wise and good men, even of her own communion, have lamented.

I have now fairly stated, and calmly considered, most of the particular doctrines of the Church of Rome. Permit me to add a few considerations of a more general nature.

That many members of that Church have been holy men, and that many are so now, I firmly believe. But I do not know, if any of them that are dead were more holy than many Protestants who are now with God; yea, than some of our own country, who were very lately removed to Abraham's bosom. To instance only in one: (Whom I mention the rather, because an account of his life is extant:) I do not believe that many of them, of the same age, were more holy than Thomas Walsh. And I doubt if any among them, living now, are more holy than several Protestants now alive.

But be this as it may: However, by the tender mercies of God, many members of the Church of Rome have been, and are now, holy men, notwithstanding their principles; yet I fear many of their principles have a natural tendency to undermine holiness; greatly to hinder, if not utterly to destroy, the essential branches of it, — to destroy the love of God, and the love of our neighbor, with all justice, and mercy, and truth.

I wish it were possible to lay all prejudice aside, and to consider this calmly and impartially. I begin with the love of God, the fountain of all that holiness without which we cannot see the Lord. And what is it that has a more natural tendency to destroy this than idolatry? Consequently, every doctrine which leads to idolatry, naturally tends to destroy it. But so does a very considerable part of the avowed doctrine of the Church of Rome. Her doctrine touching the worship of angels, of saints, the Virgin Mary in particular, — touching the worship of images, of relics, of the cross, and, above all, of the host, or consecrated wafer, — lead all who receive them to practice idolatry, flat, palpable idolatry; the paying that worship to the creature which is due to God alone. Therefore they have a natural tendency to hinder, if not utterly destroy, the love of God.

Secondly. The doctrine of the Church of Rome has a natural tendency to hinder, if not destroy, the love of our neighbor. By the love of our neighbor, I mean universal benevolence; tender goodwill to all men. For in this respect every child of man, every son of Adam, is our neighbor; as we may easily learn from our Lord's history of the good Samaritan. Now, the Church of Rome, by asserting that all who are not of her own Church, that is, the bulk of mankind, are in a state of utter rejection from God, despised and hated by him that made them; and by her bitter (I might say, accursed) anathemas, devoting to absolute, everlasting destruction, all who willingly or unwillingly differ from her in any jot or tittle; teaches all her members to look upon them with the same eyes that she supposes God to do; to regard them as mere fire-brands of hell, "vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction." And what love can you entertain for such? No other than you can believe God to have for them. Therefore, every anathema denounced by the Church of Rome against all who differ from her, has a natural tendency, not only to hinder, but utterly destroy, the love of our neighbor.

Thirdly. The same doctrine which devotes to utter destruction so vast a majority of mankind, must greatly indispose us for showing them the justice which is due to all men. For how hard is it to be just to them we hate to render them their due, either in thought, word, or action? Indeed, we violate justice by this very thing, by not loving them as ourselves. For we do not render unto all their due; seeing love is due to all mankind. If we "owe no man anything" beside, do we not owe this, "to love one another?" And where love is totally wanting, what other justice can be expected? Will not a whole train of injurious tempers and passions, of wrong words and actions, naturally follow? So plain, so undeniably plain it is, that this doctrine of the Church of Rome, (to instance at present in no more,) that "all but those of their own Church are accursed," has a natural tendency to hinder, yea, utterly to destroy, justice.

Fourthly. Its natural tendency to destroy mercy is equally glaring and undeniable. We need not use any reasoning to prove this: Only cast your eyes upon matter of fact! What terrible proofs of it do we see in the execrable crusades against the Albigenses! in those horrible wars in the

Holy Land, where so many rivers of blood were poured out! in the many millions that have been butchered in Europe, since the beginning of the Reformation; not only in the open field, but in prisons, on the scaffold, on the gibbet, at the stake! For how many thousand lives, barbarously taken away, has Philip the Second to give an account to God! For how many thousand, that infamous, perfidious butcher, Charles the Ninth of France! to say nothing of our own bloody Queen Mary, not much inferior to them! See, in Europe, in America, in the uttermost parts of Asia, the dungeons, the racks, the various tortures of the Inquisition, so unhappily styled, *the House of Mercy*! Yea, such mercy as is in the fiends in hell! such mercy as the natives of Ireland, in the last century, showed to myriads of their Protestant countrymen! Such is the mercy which the doctrine of the Church of Rome very naturally inspires!

Lastly. The doctrine of the Church of Rome has a natural tendency to destroy truth from off the earth. What can more directly tend to this, what can more incite her own members to all manner of lying and falsehood, than that precious doctrine of the Church of Rome, that no faith is to be kept with heretics? Can I believe one word that a man says, who espouses this principle? I know it has been frequently affirmed, that the Church of Rome has renounced this doctrine. But I ask, When or where? By what public and authentic act, notified to all the world? This principle has been publicly and openly avowed by a whole Council, the ever-renowned Council of Constance: An assembly never to be paralleled, either among Turks or Pagans, for regard to justice, mercy, and truth! But when and where was it as publicly disavowed? Till this is done in the face of the sun, this doctrine must stand before all mankind as an avowed principle of the Church of Rome.

And will this operate only toward heretics? toward the supposed enemies of the Church? Nay, where men have once learned not to keep faith with heretics, they will not long keep it towards Catholics. When they have once overleaped the bounds of truth, and habituated themselves to lying and dissimulation, toward one kind of men, will they not easily learn to behave in the same manner toward all men? So that, instead of “putting away all lying,” they will put away all truth; and instead of having “no guile found in their mouth,” there will be found nothing else therein!

Thus naturally do the principles of the Romanists tend to banish truth from among themselves. And have they not an equal tendency to cause lying and dissimulation among those that are not of their communion, by that Romish principle, that force is to be used in matters of religion? that if men are not of our sentiments, of our Church, we should thus “compel them to come in?” Must not this, in the very nature of things, induce all those over whom they have any power, to dissemble if not deny those opinions, who vary ever so little from what that Church has determined? And if a habit of lying and dissimulation is once formed, it will not confine itself to matters of religion. It will assuredly spread into common life, and tincture the whole conversation.

Again: Some of the most eminent Roman casuists (whose books are duly licensed by the heads of the Church) lay it down as an undoubted maxim, that, although malicious lies are sins, yet “officious lies, that is, lies told in order to do good, are not only innocent, but meritorious.” Now, what a floodgate does this open for falsehood of every kind! Therefore this doctrine, likewise, has a natural tendency to banish truth from the earth.

One doctrine more of the Romish Church must not here be passed over; I mean, that of absolution by a Priest; as it has a clear, direct tendency to destroy both justice, mercy, and truth; yea, to drive all virtue out of the world. For if a man (and not always a very good man) has power to forgive sins; if he can at pleasure forgive any violation, either of truth, or mercy, or justice; what an irresistible temptation must this be to men of weak or corrupt minds! Will they be scrupulous with regard to any pleasing sin, when they can be absolved upon easy terms? And if after this any scruple remain, is not a remedy for it provided? Are there not Papal indulgences to be had; yea, plenary indulgences? I have seen one of these which was purchased at Rome not many years ago. This single doctrine of Papal indulgences strikes at the root of all religion. And were the Church of Rome ever so faultless in all other respects, yet till this power of forgiveness sins, whether by priestly absolution or Papal indulgences, is openly and absolutely disclaimed, and till these practices are totally abolished, there can be no security in that Church for any morality, any religion, any justice, or mercy, or truth.

A LETTER
TO
THE PRINTER OF THE “PUBLIC ADVERTISER.”

 OCCASIONED BY

THE LATE ACT PASSED IN FAVOR OF POPERY.

 TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DEFENSE OF IT, IN TWO LETTERS

TO THE EDITORS OF “THE FREEMAN’S JOURNAL,” DUBLIN.

SIR,

SOME time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, “An Appeal from the Protestant Association, to the People of Great Britain.” A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious. On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object or design, kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavor to confirm the substance of that tract, by a few plain arguments.

With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as “boundless a freedom in religion” as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point: I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. Suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable, and the Koran to be the word of God. I consider not, whether the Romish religion be true or false; I build nothing on one or the other supposition. Therefore, away with all your common-place declamation about intolerance and persecution for religion! Suppose every word of Pope Pius’s creed to be true; suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible; yet, I insist upon it, that no government not Roman Catholic ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

I prove this by a plain argument: (Let him answer it that can:) — That no Roman Catholic does, or can, give security for his allegiance or peaceable behavior, I prove thus: It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a public Council, that “no faith is to be kept with heretics.” This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance; but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But as long as it is so, nothing can be more plain, than that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security to any Government of their allegiance or peaceable behavior. Therefore they ought not to be tolerated by any Government, Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan.

You may say, “Nay, but they will take an oath of allegiance.” True, five hundred oaths; but the maxim, “No faith is to be kept with heretics,” sweeps them all away as a spider’s web. So that still no Governors that are not Roman Catholics can have any security of their allegiance.

Again: Those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the Pope can give no security of their allegiance to any Government; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this: Therefore, they can give no security for their allegiance.

The power of granting pardons for all sins, past, present, and to come, is, and has been for many centuries, one branch of his spiritual power.

But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power can give no security for their allegiance; since they believe the Pope can pardon rebellions, high treason, and all other sins whatsoever.

The power of dispensing with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the Pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power must acknowledge this. But whoever acknowledges the dispensing power of the Pope can give no security for his allegiance to any Government.

Oaths and promises are none; they are light as air; a dispensation makes them all null and void.

Nay, not only the Pope, but even a Priest, has power to pardon sins! This is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they that acknowledge this cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any Government. Oaths are no security at all; for the Priest can pardon both perjury and high treason.

Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that, upon principles of reason, no Government ought to tolerate men who cannot give any security to that Government for their allegiance and peaceable behavior. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that “no faith is to be kept with heretics;” but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution, or the spiritual power of the Pope.

“But the late Act,” you say, “does not either tolerate or encourage Roman Catholics.” I appeal to matter of fact. Do not the Romanists themselves understand it as a toleration? You know they do. And does it not already (let alone what it may do by and by) encourage them to preach openly, to build chapels, (at Bath and elsewhere,) to raise seminaries, and to make numerous converts day by day to their intolerant, persecuting principles? I can point out, if need be, several of the persons. And they are increasing daily.

But “nothing dangerous to English liberty is to be apprehended from them.” I am not certain of that. Some time since, a Romish Priest; came to

one I knew, and, after talking with her largely, broke out, "You are no heretic; you have the experience of a real Christian!" "And would you," she asked, "burn me alive?" He said, "God forbid! — unless it were for the good of the Church!"

Now, what security could she have had for her life, if it had depended on that man? The good of the Church would have burst all the ties of truth, justice, and mercy; especially when seconded by the absolution of a Priest, or (if need were) a Papal pardon.

If any one please to answer this, and to set his name, I shall probably reply. — But the productions of anonymous writers, I do not promise to take any notice of.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

CITY-ROAD,
January 21, 1780.

JOHN WESLEY.

TWO LETTERS

TO

THE EDITORS OF THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL, DUBLIN.

TO THE READER.

SEVERAL months since, Father O'Leary, a Capuchin Friar in Dublin, published remarks upon this Letter in the Freeman's Journals. As soon as these were sent to me, I published a Reply in the same Paper. When I read more of his Remarks, printed in five succeeding Journals, I wrote a second Reply; but did not think it worthwhile to follow, step by step, so wild, rambling a writer.

Mr. O'Leary has now put his six Letters into one, which are reprinted in London, with this title, "Mr. O'Leary's remarks on the Rev. Mr. W.'s Letters in Defense of the Protestant Associations in England; to which are prefixed Mr. Wesley's Letters."

Is it by negligence or by design, that there are so many mistakes even in a title page?

1. "To which are prefixed Mr. W.'s Letters." No: the second of those Letters is not mine. I never saw it before.
2. But where are the two Letters published in the Freeman's Journal? Why is a spurious Letter palmed upon us, and the genuine one suppressed?
3. "Letters in Defense of the Protestant Associations in England." Hold! In my first Letter I have only three lines in defense of a Tract published in

London. But I have not one line “in Defense of the Associations,” either in London or elsewhere.

If Mr. O’Leary will seriously answer the two following Letters, he may expect a serious reply. But if he has only drollery and low wit to oppose to argument, I shall concern myself no further about him.

LONDON,
Dec. 29, 1780.

LETTER I.

GENTLEMEN,

1. MR. O’LEARY does well to entitle his Paper “Remarks,” as that word may mean anything or nothing; but it is no more an answer to my Letter, than to the Bull Unigenitus. He likewise does wisely in prefacing his “Remarks” with so handsome a compliment: This may naturally incline you to think well of his judgment, which is no small point gained.

2. His manner of writing is easy and pleasant; but might it not as well be more serious? The subject we are treating of is not a light one: It moves me to tears rather than to laughter. I plead for the safety of my country; yea, for the children that are yet unborn. “But cannot your country be safe, unless the Roman Catholics are persecuted for their religion?” Hold! religion is out of the question: But I would not have them persecuted at all; I would only have them hindered from doing hurt. I would not put it in their power (and I do not wish that others should) to cut the throats of their quiet neighbors. “But they will give security for their peaceable behavior.” They cannot while they continue Roman Catholics; they cannot while they are members of that Church which receives the decrees of the Council of Constance, which maintains the spiritual power of the Bishop of Rome, or the doctrine of priestly absolution.

3. This I observed in my late Letter. Whoever, therefore, would remark upon it to any purpose, must prove these three things:

- (1.) That the decree of the Council of Constance publicly made, has been publicly disclaimed.
- (2.) That the Pope has not power to pardon sins, or to dispense with oaths, vows, and promises. And,
- (3.) That no Priest has power to pardon sins.

But has Mr. O'Leary proved these three points? Has he proved any one of them? He has, indeed, said something upon the first: He denies such a decree was ever made.

4. I am persuaded Mr. O'Leary is the first man that ever made the important discovery. But, before he is quite sure, let him look again into Father L'Abbe's "Concilia Maxima," printed at Paris in the year 1672. The last volume contains a particular account of the Council of Constance; one of whose decrees (page 169) is, "That heretics ought to be put to death, *non obstantibus salvis conductibus Imperatoris, Regum, etc.*, notwithstanding the public faith engaged to them in the most solemn manner." Who then can affirm that no such doctrine or violation of faith with heretics is authorized by this Council? Without putting on spectacles, which, blessed be God, I do not wear, I can read a little Latin still. And, while I can, I must fix this horrid doctrine on the Council of Constance.

5. But, supposing the Council of Constance had never advanced this doctrine, or the Church of Rome had publicly disclaimed it, my conclusion stands good till it is proved,

- (1.) That no Priest has a power of pardoning sins; and,
- (2.) That the Pope has neither a power of pardoning sins, nor of dispensing with oaths, vows, promises, etc.

Mr. O'Leary has proved neither of these: And what has he proved? It is hard to say. But if he proves nothing, he either directly or indirectly asserts many things. In particular, he asserts,

- (1.) "Mr. Wesley has arraigned in the jargon of the Schools."

Heigh-day! What has this to do here? There is no more of the jargon of the Schools in my Letter, than there is of Arabic. "The

Catholics all over the world are liars, perjurers," etc. Nay, I have not arraigned one of them. This is a capital mistake. I arraign the doctrines, not the men. Either defend them, or renounce them.

"I do renounce them," says Mr. O'Leary. Perhaps you do. But the Church of Rome has never renounced them. "He asperses our communion in a cruel manner." I do not asperse it at all in saying, these are the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Who can prove the contrary?

- (2.) "Mr. O'Leary did not even attempt to seduce the English soldiery." I believe it; but does this prove any of these three points? "But Queen Elizabeth and King James roasted heretics in Smithfield!" In what year? I doubt the fact.
- (3.) "Mr. Wesley is become an apologist of those who burned the chapel in Edinburgh." Is not this said purely *ad movendam invidiam*? "to inflame the minds of the people?" For it has no shadow of truth. I never yet wrote nor spoke one word in their defense. "He urged the rabble to light that fire." No more than he urged them to dethrone the King.
- (4.) "Does Mr. Wesley intend to sound Alecto's horn, or the war-shell of the Mexicans?" All this is cruel aspersion indeed; designed merely to inflame! What I intend is neither more nor less than this, — to contribute my mite to preserve our constitution both in Church and State.
- (5.) "They were the Scotch and English regicides who gave rise to the Irish massacre." *The Irish massacre!* Was there ever any such thing? Was not the whole account a mere Protestant lie? O no! it was a melancholy truth, wrote in the blood of many thousands. But the regicides no more gave rise to that massacre than the Hottentots. The whole matter was planned several years, and executed before the King's death was thought of. "But Mr. Wesley is sowing the seeds of another massacre!" Such another as the massacre of Paris?

6. "Was he the trumpeter of persecution when he was persecuted himself?" Just as much as now. Cruel aspersions still! designed and calculated only to inflame. "Did he then abet persecution on the score of conscience?" No, nor now. Conscience is out of the question. "His Letter contains all the horrors invented by blind misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language." Is this gentleman in his senses? I hope not. Else I know not what excuse to make for him. Not one bitter word is in my Letter. I have learned to put away "all bitterness, with all malice." But still this is wide of the mark; which of those three points does it prove?

7. "In his Second Letter, he promises to put out the fire which he has already kindled in England." *Second Letter!* What is that? I know nothing of it. *The fire which he has kindled in England.* When? Where? I have kindled no fire in England, any more than in Jamaica. I have done, and will do, all that is in my power to put out that which others have kindled.

8. "He strikes out a creed of his own for Roman Catholics. This fictitious creed he forces upon them." My words are these: "Suppose every word of Pope Pius's Creed to be true." I say not a word more of the matter. Now, I appeal to every reasonable man, Is this striking out a creed of my own for Roman Catholics? Is this forcing a fictitious creed on them, "like the Frenchman and the blunderer in the comedy?" What have I to do with one or the other? Is not this dull jest quite out of season? And is the creed, composed by the Council of Trent, and the Bull of Pope Pius IV., a fictitious one? Before Mr. O'Leary asserts this again, let him look into the *Concilia Maxima* once more, and read there, *Bulla Pii Quarti super forma Juramenti professionis fidei*.³⁰ This *forma professionis fidei* I call Pope Pius's Creed. If his "stomach revolts from it," who can help it?

9. Whether the account given by Philip Melancthon of the words spoken (not in Hebrew, but in Latin) be true or false, it does not at all affect the account of Miss Duchesne, which I gave in her own words. And I cannot but observe, that, after all the witticisms which he has bestowed upon it, Mr. O'Leary does not deny that the Priest might have burnt her, "had it been for the good of the Church."

10. “Remark a Missionary inflaming the rabble, and propagating black slander.” Remark a San Benito cap, painted with devils; but let him put it on, whom it fits. It does not fit me: I inflame no rabble: I propagate no slander at all. But Mr. O’Leary does. He propagates a heap of slander in these his Remarks. I say too, “Let the appeal be made to the public and their impartial reason.” I have nothing to do with the “jargon or rubbish of the Schools,” lugged in like “the jargon of the Schools” before. But I would be glad if Mr. O’Leary would tell us what these two pretty phrases mean.

The whole matter is this. I have, without the least bitterness, advanced three reasons why I conceive it is not safe to tolerate the Roman Catholics. But still, I would not have them persecuted: I wish them to enjoy the same liberty, civil and religious, which they enjoyed in England before the late Act was repealed. Meantime, I would not have a sword put into their hands; I would not give them liberty to hurt others. Mr. O’Leary, with much archness and pleasantry, has nibbled at one of these three reasons, leaving the other two untouched. If he chooses to attack them in his next, I will endeavor to give him a calm and serious answer.

I am, Gentlemen,
 Your obedient servant,
 JOHN WESLEY.

MANCHESTER, *March* 23, 1780.

LETTER II.

GENTLEMEN,

SOME time ago, in a Letter published at London, I observed, “Roman Catholics cannot give those whom they account heretics any sufficient security for their peaceable behavior.”

1. Because it has been publicly avowed in one of their General Councils, and never publicly disclaimed, that faith is not to be kept with heretics;
2. Because they hold the doctrine of priestly absolution; and,
3. The doctrine of Papal pardons and dispensations.

Mr. O’Leary has published “Remarks” on this letter; nine parts in ten of which are quite wide of the mark. Not that they are wide of *his* mark, which is to introduce a plausible panegyric upon the Roman Catholics, mixed with keen invectives against the Protestants, whether true or false it matters not. All this is admirably well calculated to inspire the reader with aversion to these heretics, and to bring them back to the holy, harmless, much-injured Church of Rome. And I should not wonder, if these six papers should make six thousand converts to her.

Close arguing he does not attempt; but he vapors and skips to and fro, and rambles to all points of the compass, in a very lively and entertaining manner.

Whatever has the face of an argument in his First Letter I answered before. Those of the 14th, 16th, 18th, and 21st instant, I pass over at present: I have now only to do with what he advances in your Journal of March 12.

Here I read: “For Mr. Wesley’s Second Letter, see the last page.” I have been it; but I can find no more of the Second Letter in the last page, than in the first. It would be strange if I did; for that Second Letter was never

heard of, but in Mr. O'L.'s "Remarks." "But why then does he mention it over and over?" Truly, I cannot tell.

He begins: "Fanaticism" — Hold! There is no fanaticism in my Letter, but plain, sober reason. I "now expect" (they are his own words) "a serious answer to a serious charge."

My argument was: The Council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics: But it has never been openly disclaimed. Therefore those who receive this Council cannot be trusted by those whom they account heretics. This is my immediate conclusion. And if the premises be admitted, it will infallibly follow.

On this Mr. O'L. says, "A Council so often quoted challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with all possible precision and impartiality. At a time when the broachers of a new doctrine" (as new as the Bible) "were kindling the fire of sedition, and shaking the foundations of thrones and kingdoms," — big words, but entirely void of truth! — "was held the Council of Constance. To this was cited John Huss, famous for propagating errors, tending to — wrest the sceptre from the hands of Kings." — Equally true! "He was obnoxious to Church and State." To the Church of Rome; not to the State in any degree.

"Protestant and Catholic legislators enacted laws for burning heretics." How wisely are these jumbled together; and the Protestants placed first! But pray, what Protestant legislator made such laws, either before or after the Catholic ones? I know, one man, Servetus, was burned at Geneva.; but I know not that there was any law for it. And I know, one woman, Joan Bocher, was burned in Smithfield, much against the mind of King Edward. But what is this to the numbers who were inhumanely butchered by Queen Mary; to say nothing of her savage husband? "But the same laws were executed by Queen Elizabeth and King James." How? Did either of these burn heretics? Queen Elizabeth put two Anabaptists to death; but what was this to the achievements of her sister?

He adds a well-devised apology for the Romish persecutions of the Protestants as necessarily resulting from the nature of things, and not from

any wrong principles. And this he illustrates by the treatment formerly given to the Methodists, “whose love-feasts and watch-nights roused the vigilance of the Magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble.” Indeed, they did not. Not only no Magistrate ever objected either to one or the other, but no mob, even in the most turbulent times, ever interrupted them.

But to the Council: “Huss strikes at the root of all temporal power and civil authority. He boldly asserts, that all Princes, Magistrates, etc., in the state of mortal sin, are deprived, *ipso facto*, of all power and jurisdiction. And by broaching these doctrines, he makes Bohemia a theater of intestine war. See the Acts of the Council of Constance in L’Abbe’s Collection of Councils.”

I have seen them, and I can find nothing of all this therein. But more of this by and by.

“He gave notice that he would stand his trial; but he attempted to escape.” No, never; this is pure invention. “He is arrested at Constance,” — whence he never attempted to escape, — “and confined. His friends plead his safe-conduct. The Council then declared, ‘No safe-conduct granted by the Emperor or any other Princes, to heretics, ought to hinder them from being punished as justice shall require. And the person who has promised them security shall not be obliged to keep his promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged.’”

And did the Council of Constance declare this? “Yes,” says Mr. O’Leary. I desire no more. But, before I argue upon the point, permit me to give a little fuller account of the whole affair: —

The Council of Constance was called by the Emperor Sigismund and Pope John XXIII., in the year 1414. Before it began, the Emperor sent some Bohemian gentlemen to conduct John Huss to Constance, solemnly promising that he should “come and return freely, without fraud or interruption.”

But before he left Prague, he waited on the Bishop of Nazareth, Papal Inquisitor for that city and diocese, who, in the presence of many witnesses, gave him the following testimonial: —

“We, Nicholas, do by these presents make known to all men, that we have often talked with that honorable man, Master John Huss, and in all his sayings, doings, and behavior, have proved him to be a faithful man; finding no manner of evil, sinister, or erroneous doings in him, unto this present. PRAGUE, *August 30, 1414.*”

This was attested by the hand and seal of the public notary, named Michael Pruthatietz.

After this, Conrade, Archbishop of Prague, declared before all the Barons of Bohemia, that “he knew not that John Huss was culpable or faulty in any crime or offense whatever.”

So neither the Inquisitor nor the Archbishop knew anything of “his making Bohemia a theater of intestine war!”

In October he began his journey, accompanied by two noblemen, Wencelat de Duba, and John de Clum. On November 3rd, he came to Constance, and was treated with great respect. But not long after, he was suddenly arrested and cast into a noisome prison. Here he quickly fell sick. During his sickness, his accusers exhibited twelve articles against him. But none of them charge him with sedition. They relate purely to the Church.

May 14, 1415. The Nobles of Bohemia complained to the Council, “When Master John Huss came to the Council, under the Emperor’s safe-conduct, he was, in violation of this public faith, imprisoned before he was heard.” They add: “And he is now grievously tormented, both with fetters, and with hunger and thirst.”

June 8. His accusers brought thirty-nine articles more, and afterward twenty-six others. But both the former and the latter relate wholly to the Church.

Seven more were brought next. The First of these is, “If the Pope, Bishop, or Prelate be in deadly sin, he is then no Pope, Bishop, or Prelate.” But this he himself explains in the same tract whence it is taken. “Such, as touching their deserts, are not worthily Popes or Pastors before God; yet, as touching their office, are Popes and Pastors.”

After these, six more articles were exhibited; but all relate to the Church, as do nineteen more that followed them. In fine, nineteen others were preferred by the Chancellor and University of Paris. One of these was, “No man being in deadly sin is a true Pope, Prelate, or Lord.” This seems to be the same with the preceding charge; only they have mended it by adding the word *Lord*. Another was, “Subjects ought publicly to reprove the vices of their rulers.” It does not appear that ever he held this.

In the Seventeenth Session, the sentence and condemnation of John Huss was read and published. The Emperor then commanded the Duke of Bavaria to deliver him to the executioners; for which glorious exploit he was thus addressed by the Bishop of Landy, in the name of the Council: “This most holy and goodly labor was reserved only for thee, O most noble Prince! Upon thee only doth it lie, to whom the whole rule and ministration of justice is given. Wherefore thou hast established thy praise and renown; even by the mouths of babes and sucklings thy praise shall be celebrated for evermore.”

From this whole transaction we may observe,

1. That John Huss was guilty of no crime, either in word or action; even his enemies, the Archbishop of Prague, and the Papal Inquisitor, being Judges.
2. That he never preached or wrote anything tending to sedition; neither was there in fact any sedition, much less intestine war, in Bohemia, while he ministered there.
3. That his real fault, and his only one, was, opposing the Papal usurpations.

4. That this “most noble Prince” was a bigoted, cruel, perfidious murderer; and that the Fathers of the Council deserve the same praise, seeing they urged him to embrace his hands in innocent blood, in violation of the public faith, and extolled him to the skies for so doing; and seeing they have laid it down as a maxim, that the most solemn promise made to an heretic may be broken.

But says Mr. O’Leary, “This regards the peculiar case of safe-conducts granted by Princes to heretics.” If you mean, they took occasion from a particular case to establish a general rule, this is true; but what then? If the public faith with heretics may be violated in one instance, it may be in a thousand.” But can the rule be extended farther?” It may; it must; we cannot tell where to stop. Away then with your witticisms on so awful a subject! What! do you sport with human blood? I take burning men alive to be a very serious thing. I pray, spare your jests on the occasion.

But you have another plea: “Sigismund only promised to guard him from any violence in going to the Council.” Why, this was just nothing. What man in his wits would have moved a step upon such a promise as this? “But this was all it was in his power to do.” It was not. It was in his power to have told the Council, “My own honor, and yours, and that of the empire, are at stake. I will not upon any account suffer the public faith to be violated: I will not make myself infamous to all generations. My name shall not stink to all future ages. I will rather part with my empire, with my life.” He could have taken John Huss out of their hands, and have sent him safe to his own country. He would have done it, had he been an honest man; had he had either honor or conscience. I ask Mr. O’Leary, Would not you have done it, had you been in Sigismund’s place? If you say, “No,” a Protestant ought not to trust you, any more than he would trust a wild bull.

I am afraid this is the case, for you strangely add: “It was nugatory in Sigismund to grant him a safe-conduct; for neither King nor Emperor could deprive the Bishops of their right of judging” (add, and of murdering) “heretics.” It is plain, Sigismund thought he could, that he could screen Huss from all dangers; else he had been both a fool and a knave to promise

it; especially by a public instrument, which pledged his own honor, and that of the whole empire, for his safety.

Now for flourish: "Thus the superannuated charge of violation of faith with Heretics" — no more superannuated now, than it was while John Huss was in the flames — "vanishes away." No, nor ever will. It still stares us in the face; and will do so, till another General Council publicly and explicitly repeals that infamous determination of the Council of Constance, and declares the burning of John Huss to have been an open violation of all justice, mercy, and truth. But flourish on: "The foundation then of Mr. Wesley's aerial fabric being sapped," — not at all, — "the superstructure falls of course, and his long train of false and unchristian assertions." What can this mean? I know of no "long train of assertions," whether true or false. I use three arguments, and no more, in proof of one conclusion.

"What more absurd, than to insist on a General Council's disclaiming a doctrine which they never taught!" They did teach it; and that not by the by, not incidentally; but they laid it down as a stated rule of action, dictated by the Holy Ghost. I quote chapter and verse: I say too, "See 'L' Abbe's Councils,' printed at Paris, in 1672." Yea, and they were not ashamed to publish this determination to all the Christian world! and to demonstrate their sincerity therein, by burning a man alive. And this Mr. O'Leary humorously compares to the roasting a piece of beef! With equal tenderness I suppose he would compare the "making the beards of heretics," (that is, thrusting a burning furze-bush in their face,) to the singeing a fowl before it was roasted.

"It is sufficient to disclaim it, when it is fixed upon us." Then disclaim it without delay; for it is fixed upon you, to all intents and purposes. Nay, and you fix it upon yourselves, in every new edition of the Councils; in all of which, this Council stands *in aeternam rei memoriam*,³¹ and this very determination, without the least touch of blame! It must therefore stand as an avowed doctrine of the Church of Rome, that "heretics ought to be condemned and executed, notwithstanding the most solemn assurances to the contrary." In other words, that "the public faith, even that of Kings and Emperors, ought not to be kept with heretics."

What security then for my life can any man give me, till he utterly renounces the Council of Constance? What security can any Romanist give a Protestant, till this doctrine is publicly abjured? If Mr. O'Leary has anything more to plead for this Council, I shall follow him step by step. But let him keep his word, and "give a serious answer to a serious charge." Drollery may come in when we are talking of roasting fowls; but not when we are talking of roasting men.

Would I then wish the Roman Catholics to be persecuted? I never said or hinted any such thing. I abhor the thought: It is foreign to all I have preached and wrote for these fifty years. But I would wish the Romanists in England (I had others in view) to be treated still with the same lenity that they have been these sixty years; to be allowed both civil and religious liberty, but not permitted to undermine ours. I wish them to stand just as they did before the late Act was passed; not to be persecuted or hurt themselves; but gently restrained from hurting their neighbors.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

CHESTER, *March* 31, 1780.

A DISAVOWAL OF PERSECUTING PAPISTS.

I HAVE read a Tract lately sent me, and will now give my free thoughts upon the subject.

I set out early in life with an utter abhorrence of persecution in every form, and a full conviction that every man has a right to worship God according to his own conscience. Accordingly, more than fifty years ago, I preached on those words, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” And I preached on the same text, in London, the 5th of last November. And this I extend to members of the Church of Rome, as well as to all other men.

I agree not only that many of these in former ages were good men, (as Thomas a Kempis, Francis Sales, and the Marquis de Renty,) but that many of them are so at this day. I believe, I know some Roman Catholics who sincerely love both God and their neighbor, and who steadily endeavor to do unto every one as they wish him to do unto them.

But I cannot say this is a general case; nay, I am fully convinced it is not. The generality of Roman Catholics, wherever I have been, are of the same principles, and the same spirit, with their forefathers. And, indeed, if they had the same principles, it could not be doubted but they would be of the same practice too, if opportunity should serve.

These principles openly avowed by their forefathers of priestly absolution, Papal indulgences, and no faith to be kept with heretics, have never been openly and authoritatively disavowed even unto this day. And

until they are, a Roman Catholic, consistent with his principles, cannot be trusted by a Protestant.

For the same principles naturally tend to produce the same spirit and the same practice. Very lately, a person seeing many flocking to a place, which she did not know was a Romish chapel, innocently said, "What do all these people want?" and was answered by one of them, with great vehemence, "We want your blood. And we will have it soon."

On Friday last, I dined with a gentlewoman, whose father, living in Dublin, was very intimate with a Roman Catholic gentleman. Having invited him to dinner one day, in the course of conversation, Mrs. Grattan asked him, "Sir, would you really cut my husband's throat, if your Priest commanded you?" He answered honestly, "Madam, Mr. Grattan is my friend; and I love him well; but I must obey the Church." "Sir," said she, "I beg I may never more see you within my doors."

But still, be their principles what they will, I would not persecute them. So persecution is utterly out of the question. I know no one that pleads for it. Therefore the writing or talking against it is time lost; it is proving what no one denies.

And the Romanists never have been persecuted in England since I remember. They have enjoyed a full toleration. I wish them to enjoy the same toleration still; neither more nor less.

I would not hurt a hair of their head. Meantime, I would not put it into their power to hurt me, or any other persons whom they believe to be heretics. I steer the middle way. I would neither kill nor be killed. I would not use the sword against; them, nor put it into their hands, lest they should use it against me; I wish them well, but I dare not trust them.

But still I say, persecution is out of the question. And I look on all vague declamations upon it, which have been lately poured out, as either mere flourishes of persons who think they talk prettily, or artful endeavors to puzzle the cause, and to throw dust into the eyes of honest Englishmen.

JOHN WESLEY.

BRISTOL, *March* 18, 1782.

THE ORIGIN OF IMAGE-WORSHIP AMONG CHRISTIANS.

WHEN Christianity was first preached in the world, it was supported by such miraculous assistance of the divine power, that there was need of little or no human aid to the propagation of it. Not only the Apostles, who first preached it, but even the lay-believers were sufficiently instructed in all the articles of faith, and were inspired with the power of working miracles, and the gift of speaking in languages unknown to them before.

But when the gospel was spread, and had taken root through the world; when Kings and Princes became Christians, and when temples were built and magnificently adorned for Christian worship; then the zeal of some well-disposed Christians brought pictures into the churches, not only as ornaments, but as instructors of the ignorant; and from thence they were called *libri laicorum*, — “the books of the people.” Thus the walls of the churches were beset with pictures, representing all the particular transactions mentioned. And they who did not understand a letter of a book knew how to give a very good account of the gospel, being taught to understand the particular passages of it in the pictures of the church. Thus, as hieroglyphics were the first means of propagating knowledge, before writing by letters and words was invented; so the more ignorant people were taught compendiously by pictures, what, by the scarcity of teachers, they had not an opportunity of being otherwise fully instructed in.

But these things, which were at first intended for good, became, by the devil’s subtlety, a snare for the souls of Christians. For when Christian

Princes, and the rich and great, vied with one another, who should embellish the temples with greatest magnificence, the pictures upon the walls were turned into gaudy images upon the altars; and the people being deceived by the outward appearance of the Priests' bowing and kneeling, (before those images,) as the different parts of their devotion led them, they imagined that those gestures were designed to do honor to the images, before which they were performed; (which they certainly were not;) and so; from admiring, the people came to adore them. Thus, what were at first designed as monuments of edification, became the instruments of superstition. This being a fatal oversight in the Clergy, at first neglected, or winked at, by degrees (as all errors have crept into the Church) gathered strength; so that, from being in the beginning the dotage of the ignorant vulgar, the poison infected those of better rank, and, by their influence and countenance, brought some of the Priests over to their opinion, or rather those Priests were the occasion of deceiving the rich and powerful, especially the female sex, for ends not very reputable or agreeable to the integrity of their profession. But so it was, that what the Priests at first winked at, they afterwards gave countenance to; and what they once countenanced, they thought themselves obliged in honor to defend; till, at last, superstition came to be preached from the pulpits, and gross idolatry obtruded upon the people for true devotion.

It is true, there were many of the sacred order, whose sound hearts and clear heads were very averse to this innovation; who both preached and wrote against the worship of images, showing both the wickedness and folly of it. But the disease was so far spread, and the poison had taken such root, that the consequence of opposition was the dividing the Church into parties and schisms, and at last proceeded to blood and slaughter.

N. B. Is it not marvelous that what was so simple in the beginning, should degenerate into such idolatry as is scarce to be found in the heathen world! While this, and several other errors, equally contrary to Scripture and reason, are found in the Church, together with the abominable lives of multitudes who call themselves Christians, the very name of Christianity must stink in the nostrils of the Mahometans, Jews, and Infidels.

A LETTER

TO

A PERSON LATELY JOINED WITH THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS.

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER WROTE BY HIM.

BRISTOL, *February* 10, 1747-8.

YOU ask me, “Is there any difference between Quakerism and Christianity?” I think there is. What that difference is, I will tell you as plainly as I can.

I will, First, set down the account of Quakerism, so called, which is given by Robert Barclay; and, Then, add wherein it agrees with, and wherein it differs from, Christianity.

“1. Seeing the height of all happiness is placed in the true knowledge of God, the right understanding of this is what is; most necessary to be known in the first place.

“2. It is by the Spirit alone that the true knowledge of God hath been, is, and can be, revealed. And these revelations, which are absolutely necessary for the building up of true faith, neither do, nor can, ever contradict right reason or the testimony of the Scriptures.”

Thus far there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

“Yet these revelations are not to be subjected to the examination of the Scriptures as to a touchstone.”

Here there is a difference. The Scriptures are the touchstone whereby Christians examine all, real or supposed, revelations. In all cases they appeal “to the law and to the testimony,” and try every spirit thereby.

“3. From these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints, have proceeded the Scriptures of truth.”

In this there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

“Yet the Scriptures are not the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor the adequate primary rule of faith and manners. Nevertheless, they are a secondary rule, subordinate to the spirit. By Him the saints are led into all truth. Therefore the Spirit is the first and principal leader.”

If by these words, “The Scriptures are not the principal ground of truth and knowledge, nor the adequate, primary rule of faith and manners,” be only meant, that “the Spirit is our first and principal leader;” here is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

But there is great impropriety of expression. For though the Spirit is our principal leader, yet He is not our rule at all; the Scriptures are the rule whereby he leads us into all truth. Therefore, only talk good English; call the Spirit our *guide*, which signifies an intelligent being, and the Scriptures our *rule*, which signifies something used by an intelligent being, and all is plain and clear.

“4. All mankind is fallen and dead, deprived of the sensation of this inward testimony of God, and subject to the power and nature of the devil, while they abide in their natural state. And hence not only their words and deeds, but all their imaginations, are evil perpetually in the sight of God.

“5. God out of his infinite love hath so loved the world that he gave his only Son, to the end that whosoever believeth on him might have

everlasting life. And he enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, as he tasted death for every man.

“6. The benefit of the death of Christ is not only extended to such as have the distinct knowledge of his death and sufferings, but even unto those who are inevitably excluded from this knowledge. Even these may be partakers of the benefit of his death, though ignorant of the history, if they suffer his grace to take place in their hearts, so as of wicked men to become holy.”

In these points there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

“7. As many as receive the light, in them is produced a holy and spiritual birth, bringing forth holiness, righteousness, purity, and all other blessed fruits. By which holy birth, as we are sanctified, so we are justified.”

Here is a wide difference between Quakerism and Christianity. This is flat justification by works. Whereas, the Christian doctrine is, that “we are justified by faith;” that “unto him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.”

The ground of this mistake is, the not understanding the meaning of the word justification. For Robert Barclay takes it in the same sense as the Papists do, confounding it with sanctification. So in page 208 of his “Apology,” he says, in express terms, “Justification, taken in its proper signification, is making one just; and is all one with sanctification.”

“8. In whom this holy birth is fully brought forth, the body of sin and death is crucified, and their hearts are subjected to the truth, so as not to obey any suggestion of the evil one; but to be free from actual sinning and transgressing of the law of God, and, in that respect, perfect.

“9. They in whom his grace hath wrought in part to purify and sanctify them, may yet by disobedience fall from it, and make shipwreck of the faith.”

In these propositions there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

The uncommon expression, "This holy birth brought forth," is taken from Jacob Behmen. And indeed so are many other expressions used by the Quakers, as are also many of their sentiments.

"10. By this light of God in the heart, every true Minister is ordained, prepared, and supplied in the work of the ministry."

As to part of this proposition, there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity. Doubtless, "every true Minister is by the light of God prepared and supplied in the work of the ministry." But the Apostles themselves ordained them by "laying on of hands." So we read throughout the Acts of the Apostles.

"They who have received this gift, ought not to use it as a trade, to get money thereby. Yet it may be lawful for such to receive what may be needful to them for food and clothing."

In this there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

"We judge it noways unlawful for a woman to preach in the assemblies of God's people."

In this there is a manifest difference: For the Apostle Paul saith expressly, "Let your women keep silence in the Churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church." (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35.)

Robert Barclay, indeed, says, "Paul here only reproves the inconsiderate and talkative women."

But the text says no such thing. It evidently speaks of women in general.

Again: The Apostle Paul saith to Timothy, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. For I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man," (which public teaching necessarily implies,) "but to be in silence." (1 Timothy 2:11, 12.)

To this Robert Barclay makes only that harmless reply: "We think this is not anyways repugnant to this doctrine." Not repugnant to this, "I do suffer a woman to teach!" Then I know not what is.

"But a woman 'labored with Paul in the work of the gospel.'" Yea, but not in the way he had himself expressly forbidden.

"But Joel foretold, 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.' And 'Philip had four daughters which prophesied.' And the Apostle himself directs women to prophesy; only with their heads covered."

Very good. But how do you prove that prophesying in any of these places means preaching?

"11. All true worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving of his own Spirit. We ought not to pray or preach where and when we will, but where and when we are moved thereto by his Spirit. All other worship, both praises, prayers, and preaching, which man sets about in his own will, and at his own appointment, which he can begin and end at pleasure, do or leave undone, as himself sees meet, are but superstitious, will-worship, and abominable idolatries."

Here lies one of the main differences between Quakerism and Christianity.

It is true indeed, that "all true worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving of his own Spirit;" or, (to speak plain,) that we cannot truly worship God, unless his Spirit move or incline our hearts. It is equally true, that "we ought to pray and preach, only where and when we are moved thereto by his Spirit;" but I fear you do not in anywise understand what the being "moved by his Spirit" means. God moves man, when he has made a reasonable creature, according to the reason which he has given him. He moves him by his understanding, as well as his

affections; by light, as well as by heat. He moves him to do this or that by conviction, full as often as by desire. Accordingly, you are as really “moved by the Spirit” when he convinces you you ought to feed him that is hungry, as when he gives you ever so strong an impulse, desire, or inclination so to do.

In like manner, you are as really moved by the Spirit to pray, whether it be in public or private, when you have a conviction it is the will of God you should, as when you have the strongest impulse upon your heart. And he does truly move you to preach, when in His light you “see light” clearly satisfying you it is his will, as much as when you feel the most vehement impulse or desire to “hold forth the words of eternal life.”

Now let us consider the main proposition: “All worship which man sets about in his own will, and at his own appointment” — Hold! that is quite another thing. It may be at his own appointment, and yet not in his own will. For instance: It is not my own will to preach at all. It is quite contrary to my will. Many a time have I cried out, “Lord, send by whom thou wilt send; only send not me!” But I am moved by the Spirit of God to preach: He clearly shows me it is his will I should; and that I should do it when and where the greatest number of poor sinners may be gathered together. Moved by Him, I give up my will, and appoint a time and place, when by his power I trust to speak in his name.

How widely different, then, from true Christianity is that amazing, sentence: “All praises, prayers, and preaching which man can begin and end at his pleasure, do or leave undone, as himself sees meet, are superstitions, will-worship, and abominable idolatry in the sight of God!”

There is not one tittle of Scripture for this; nor yet is there any sound reason. When you take it for granted, “In all preaching which a man begins or ends at his pleasure, does or leaves undone as he sees meet, he is not moved by the Spirit of God,” you are too hasty a great deal. It may be by the Spirit, that he sees meet to do or leave it undone. How will you prove that it is not? His pleasure may depend on the pleasure of God, signified to him by his Spirit. His appointing this or that time or place does in nowise prove the contrary. Prove me that proposition, if you can: “Every

man who preaches or prays at an appointed time, preaches or prays in his own will, and not by the Spirit.”

That “all such preaching is will-worship, in the sense St. Paul uses the word,” is no more true than that it is murder. That it is superstition, remains also to be proved. That it is abominable idolatry, how will you reconcile with what follows but a few lines after? “However, it might please God, who winked at the times of ignorance, to raise some breathings and answer them.” What! answer the breathings of abominable idolatry! I observe how warily this is worded; but it allows enough. If God ever raised and answered those prayers which were made at set times, then those prayers could not be abominable idolatry.

Again: That prayers and preaching, though made at appointed times, may yet proceed from the Spirit of God, may be clearly proved from those other words of Robert Barclay himself, page 389: —

“That preaching or prayer which is not done by the actings and movings of God’s Spirit cannot beget faith.” Most true. But preaching and prayer at appointed times have begotten faith both at Bristol and Paulton. You know it well. Therefore that preaching and prayer, though at appointed times, was “done by the actings and movings of God’s Spirit.”

It follows, that this preaching and prayer were far from “abominable idolatry.” That expression can never be defended. Say, It was a rash word, and give it up.

In truth, from the beginning to the end, you set this matter upon a wrong foundation. It is not on this circumstance, — the being at set times or not, that the acceptableness of our prayers depends; but on the intention and tempers with which we pray. He that prays in faith, at whatsoever time, is heard. In every time and place, God accepts him who “lifts up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.” The charge of superstition, therefore, returns upon yourself; for what gross superstition is this, to lay so much stress on an indifferent circumstance, and so little on faith and the love of God!

But to proceed: “We confess singing of psalms to be a part of God’s worship, and very sweet and refreshful when it proceeds from a true sense of God’s love; but as for formal singing, it has no foundation in Scripture.”

In this there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

But let it be observed here, that the Quakers in general cannot be excused, if this is true. For if they “confess singing of psalms to be a part of God’s worship,” how dare they either condemn or neglect it?

“Silence is a principal part of God’s worship; that is, men’s sitting silent together, ceasing from all outwards, from their own words and actings, in the natural will and comprehension, and feeling after the inward seed of life.”

In this there is a manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

This is will-worship, if there be any such thing under heaven. For there is neither command nor example for it in Scripture.

Robert Barclay indeed refers to abundance of scriptures to prove it is a command. But as he did not see good to set them down at length, I will take the trouble to transcribe a few of them: —

“Wait on the Lord: Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.” (Psalm 27:14.) “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently; fret not thyself at him who prospereth in his way.” “Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.” (Psalm 37:7, 34.) “Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.” (Proverbs 20:22.)

By these one may judge of the rest. But how amazing is this! What are all these to the point in question?

For examples of silent meetings he refers to the five texts following: —

“They were all with one accord in one place.” (Acts 2:1.) “So they sat down with him seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: For they saw that his grief was very great.” (Job 2:13.) “Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of God. And I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.” (Ezra 9:4.) “Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.” (Ezekial 14:1; 20:1.)

Was it possible for Robert Barclay to believe, that any one of these texts was anything to the purpose?

The odd expressions here also, “Ceasing from all outwards, in the natural will and comprehension, and feeling after the inward seed of life,” are borrowed from Jacob Behmen.

“12. As there is one Lord and one faith, so there is one baptism.” Yea, one outward baptism; which you deny. Here, therefore, is another difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

But “if those whom John baptized with water were not baptized with the baptism of Christ, then the baptism of water is not the baptism of Christ.”

This is a mere quibble. The sequel ought to be, “Then that baptism of water” (that is, John’s baptism) “was not the baptism of Christ.” Who says it was?

Yet Robert Barclay is so fond of this argument, that he repeats it almost in the same words:

“If John, who administered the baptism of water, yet did not baptize with the baptism of Christ, then the baptism of water is not the baptism of Christ.”

This is the same fallacy still. The sequel here also should be, “Then that baptism of water was not the baptism of Christ.”

He repeats it, with a little variation, a third time: “Christ himself saith, ‘John baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.’”

He repeats it a fourth time: “Peter saith, ‘Then remembered I the word of the Lord, John baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.’ From all which it follows, that such as John baptized with water, yet were not baptized with the baptism of Christ.” Very true. But; this proves neither more nor less than that the baptism of John differed from the baptism of Christ. And so doubtless it did; not indeed as to the outward sign, but as to the inward grace.

“13. The breaking of bread by Christ with his disciples was but a figure, and ceases in such as have obtained the substance.”

Here is another manifest difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

From the very times that our Lord gave that command, “Do this in remembrance of me,” all Christians throughout the habitable world did eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him.

Allowing, therefore, all that Robert Barclay affirms for eighteen or twenty pages together, viz.,

- (1.) That believers partake of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner:
- (2.) That this may be done, in some sense, when we are not eating bread and drinking wine:
- (3.) That the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Papists, differ from each other with regard to the Lord’s supper: And,
- (4.) That many of them have spoken wildly and absurdly concerning it: Yet all this will never prove, that we need not do what Christ has expressly commanded to be done; and what the whole body of Christians in all ages have done, in obedience to that command.

That there was such a command, you cannot deny. But you say, “It is ceased in such as have obtained the substance.”

St. Paul knew nothing of this. He says nothing of its ceasing in all he writes of it to the Corinthians. Nay, quite the contrary. He says, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." O, say you, the Apostle means "his inward coming, which some of the Corinthians had not yet known." Nay, this cannot be his meaning. For he saith to all the Corinthian communicants, "Ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Now, if He was not come (spiritually) in some of these, undoubtedly he was in others. Consequently, he cannot be speaking here of that coming which, in many of them at least, was already past. It remains, that he speaks of his coming in the clouds, to judge both the quick and dead.

In what Robert Barclay teaches concerning the Scriptures, justification, baptism, and the Lord's supper, lies the main difference between Quakerism and Christianity.

"14. Since God hath assumed to himself the dominion of the conscience, who alone can rightly instruct and govern it; therefore it is not lawful for any whatsoever to force the consciences of others."

In this there is no difference at all between Quakerism and Christianity.

"15. It is not lawful for Christians to give or receive titles of honor, as, Your Majesty, Your Lordship, etc."

In this there is a difference between Quakerism and Christianity. Christians may give titles of honor, such as are usually annexed to certain offices.

Thus St. Paul gives the usual title of "Most Noble" to the Roman Governor. Robert Barclay indeed says, "He would not have called him such, if he had not been truly noble; as indeed he was, in that he would not give way to the fury of the Jews against him."

The Scripture says quite otherwise; that he did give way to the fury of the Jews against him. I read: "Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, (who had desired a favor against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem,

lying in wait in the way to kill him,) said to Paul, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. If I have done anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them."

Hence it plainly appears, that Festus was a very wicked person, one who, "to do the Jews a pleasure," would have betrayed the innocent blood. But although St. Paul was not ignorant of his character, still he calls him, "Most Noble Festus," giving him the title of his office; which, indeed, was neither more nor less than saying, "Governor Festus," or, "King Agrippa."

It is therefore mere superstition to scruple this. And it is, if possible, greater superstition still to scruple saying, *you*, *vous*, or *ihr*, whether to one or more persons, as is the common way of speaking in any country. It is this which fixes the language of every nation. It is this which makes me say *you* in England, *vous* in France, and *ihr* in Germany, rather than *thou*, *tu*, or *du*, rather than **טו**, **זע**, or 'et (Hebrew); which, if we speak strictly, is the only scriptural language; not *thou*, or *thee*, any more than *you*. But the placing religion in such things as these is such egregious trifling, as naturally tends to make all religion stink in the nostril of Infidels and Heathens.

And yet this, by a far greater abuse of words than that you would reform, you call the plain language. O my friend! he uses the plain language who speaks the truth from his heart; not he who says *thee* or *thou*, and in the meantime will dissemble or flatter, like the rest of the world.

"It is not lawful for Christians to kneel, or bow the body, or uncover the head, to any man."

If this is not lawful, then some law of God forbids it. Can you show me that law? If you cannot, then the scrupling this is another plain instance of superstition, not Christianity.

“It is not lawful for a Christian to use superfluities in apparel; as neither to use such games, sports, and plays, under the notion of recreations, as are not consistent with gravity and godly fear.”

As to both these propositions, there is no difference between Quakerism and Christianity. Only observe, touching the former, that the sin of superfluous apparel lies chiefly in the superfluous expense. To make it therefore a point of conscience to differ from others, as to the shape or color of your apparel, is mere superstition; let the difference lie in the price, that you may have the more wherewith to clothe them that have none.

“It is not lawful for Christians to swear before a Magistrate, nor to fight in any case.”

Whatever becomes of the latter proposition, the former is no part of Christianity; for Christ himself answered upon oath before a Magistrate. Yea, he would not answer till he was put to his oath; till the High Priest said unto him, “I adjure thee by the living God.”

Friend, you have an honest heart, but a weak head; you have a zeal, but not according to knowledge. You was zealous once for the love of God and man, for holiness of heart and holiness of life. You are now zealous for particular forms of speaking, for a set of phrases, and opinions. Once your zeal was against ungodliness and unrighteousness, against evil tempers and evil works. Now it is against forms of prayer, against singing psalms or hymns, against appointing times of praying or preaching; against saying *you* to a single person, uncovering your head, or having too many buttons upon your coat. O what a fall is here! What poor trifles are these, that now well-nigh engross your thoughts! Come back, come back, to the weightier matters of the law, to spiritual, rational, scriptural religion. No longer waste your time and strength in beating the air, in vain controversies and strife of words; but bend your whole soul to the growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the continually advancing in that holiness, without which you cannot see the Lord.

A TREATISE ON BAPTISM.

CONCERNING baptism I shall inquire, what it is; what benefits we receive by it; whether our Savior designed it to remain always in his Church; and who are the proper subjects of it.

I.

1. That it is. It is the initiatory sacrament, which enters us into covenant with God. It was instituted by Christ, who alone has power to institute a proper sacrament, a sign, seal, pledge, and means of grace, perpetually obligatory on all Christians. We know not, indeed, the exact time of its institution; but we know it was long before our Lord's ascension. And it was instituted in the room of circumcision. For, as that was a sign and seal of God's covenant, so is this.

2. The matter of this sacrament is water; which, as it has a natural power of cleansing, is the more fit for this symbolical use. Baptism is performed by washing, dipping, or sprinkling the person, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who is hereby devoted to the ever-blessed Trinity. I say, *by washing, dipping, or sprinkling*; because it is not determined in Scripture in which of these ways it shall be done, neither by any express precept, nor by any such example as clearly proves it; nor by the force or meaning of the word baptize.

3. That there is no express precept, all calm men allow. Neither is there any conclusive example. John's baptism in some things agreed with Christ's, in others differed from it. But it cannot be certainly proved from Scripture, that even John's was performed by dipping. It is true he baptized in Enon, near Salim, where there was "much water." But this might refer to breadth rather than depth; since a narrow place would not have been sufficient for so great a multitude. Nor can it be proved, that the

baptism of our Savior, or that administered by his disciples, was by immersion. No, nor that of the eunuch baptized by Philip; though “they both went down to the water:” For that going down may relate to the chariot, and implies no determinate depth of water. It might be up to their knees; it might not be above their ankles.

4. And as nothing can be determined from Scripture precept or example, so neither from the force or meaning of the word. For the words *baptize* and *baptism* do not necessarily imply *dipping*, but are used in other senses in several places. Thus we read, that the Jews “were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea;” (1 Corinthians 10:2;) but they were not plunged in either. They could therefore be only sprinkled by drops of the sea-water, and refreshing dews from the cloud; probably intimated in that, “Thou sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary.” (Psalm 67:9.) Again: Christ said to his two disciples, “Ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with;” (Mark 10:38;) but neither he nor they were dipped, but only sprinkled or washed with their own blood. Again we read (Mark 7:4) of the baptisms (so it is in the original) of pots and cups, and tables or beds. Now, pots and cups are not necessarily dipped when they are washed. Nay, the Pharisees washed the outsides of them only. And as for tables or beds, none will suppose they could be dipped. Here, then, the word *baptism*, in its natural sense, is not taken for dipping, but for washing or cleansing. And, that this is the true meaning of the word *baptize*, is testified by the greatest scholars and most proper judges in this matter. It is true, we read of being “buried with Christ in baptism.” But nothing can be inferred from such a figurative expression. Nay, if it held exactly, it would make as much for sprinkling as for plunging; since, in burying, the body is not plunged through the substance of the earth, but rather earth is poured or sprinkled upon it.

5. And as there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture, so there is very probable proof of the contrary. It is highly probable, the Apostles themselves baptized great numbers, not by dipping, but by washing, sprinkling, or pouring water. This clearly represented the cleansing from sin, which is figured by baptism. And the quantity of water used was not material; no more than the quantity of bread and wine in the Lord’s supper. The jailer “and all his house were baptized” in the prison;

Cornelius with his friends, (and so several households,) at home. Now, is it likely, that all these had ponds or rivers, in or near their houses, sufficient to plunge them all? Every unprejudiced person must allow, the contrary is far more probable. Again: Three thousand at one time, and five thousand at another, were converted and baptized by St. Peter at Jerusalem; where they had none but the gentle waters of Siloam, according to the observation of Mr. Fuller: "There were no water-mills in Jerusalem, because there was no stream large enough to drive them." The place, therefore, as well as the number, makes it highly probable that all these were baptized by sprinkling or pouring, and not by immersion. To sum up all, the manner of baptizing (whether by dipping or sprinkling) is not determined in Scripture. There is no command for one rather than the other. There is no example from which we can conclude for dipping rather than sprinkling. There are probable examples of both; and both are equally contained in the natural meaning of the word.

II.

1. What are the benefits we receive by baptism, is the next; point to be considered. And the first of these is, the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death. That we are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery, was the unanimous sense of the ancient Church, as it is expressed in the Ninth Article of our own. And the Scripture plainly asserts, that we were "shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us;" that "we were all by nature children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins;" that "in Adam all die;" that "by one man's disobedience all were made sinners;" that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; which came upon all men, because all had sinned." This plainly includes infants; for they too die; therefore they have sinned: But not by actual sin; therefore, by original; else what need have they of the death of Christ? Yea, "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned" actually "according to the similitude of Adam's transgression." This, which can relate to infants only, is a clear proof that the whole race of mankind are obnoxious both to the guilt and punishment of Adam's transgression. But; "as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, to justification of life." And the virtue of this free gift, the merits

of Christ's life and death, are applied to us in baptism. "He gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word;" (Ephesians 5:25, 26;) namely, in baptism, the ordinary instrument of our justification. Agreeably to this, our Church prays in the baptismal office, that the person to be baptized may be "washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and, being delivered from God's wrath, receive remission of sins, and enjoy the everlasting benediction of his heavenly washing;" and declares in the Rubric at the end of the office, "It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin are saved." And this is agreeable to the unanimous judgment of all the ancient Fathers.

2. By baptism we enter into covenant with God; into that everlasting covenant, which he hath commanded forever; (Psalm 111:9;) that new covenant, which he promised to make with the spiritual Israel; even to "give them a new heart and a new spirit, to sprinkle clean water upon them," (of which the baptismal is only a figure,) "and to remember their sins and iniquities no more;" in a word, to be their God, as he promised to Abraham, in the evangelical covenant which he made with him and all his spiritual offspring. (Genesis 17:7, 8.) And as circumcision was then the way of entering into this covenant, so baptism is now; which is therefore styled by the Apostle, (so many good interpreters render his words,) "the stipulation, contract, or covenant of a good conscience with God."

3. By baptism we are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ, its Head. The Jews were admitted into the Church by circumcision, so are the Christians by baptism. For "as many as are baptized into Christ," in his name, "have" thereby "put on Christ;" (Galatians 3:27;) that is, are mystically united to Christ, and made one with him. For "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," (1 Corinthians 12:13,) namely, the Church, "the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12.) From which spiritual, vital union with him, proceeds the influence of his grace on those that are baptized; as from our union with the Church, a share in all its privileges, and in all the promises Christ has made to it.

4. By baptism, we who were "by nature children of wrath" are made the children of God. And this regeneration which our Church in so many

places ascribes to baptism is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith; being “grafted into the body of Christ’s Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.” This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord: “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5.) By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again; whence it is also called by the Apostle, “the washing of regeneration.” Our Church therefore ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ himself has done. Nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which, added thereto, makes it a sacrament. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long-continued wickedness.

5 In consequence of our being made children of God, we are heirs of the kingdom of heaven. “If children,” (as the Apostle observes,) “then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” Herein we receive a title to, and an earnest of, “a kingdom which cannot be moved.” Baptism doth now save us, if we live answerable thereto; if we repent, believe, and obey the gospel: Supposing this, as it admits us into the Church here, so into glory hereafter.

III.

1. But did our Savior design this should remain always in his Church? This is the Third thing we are to consider. And this may be dispatched in a few words, since there can be no reasonable doubt, but it was intended to last as long as the Church into which it is the appointed means of entering. In the ordinary way, there is no other means of entering into the Church or into heaven.

2. In all ages, the outward baptism is a means of the inward; as outward circumcision was of the circumcision of the heart. Nor would it have availed a Jew to say, “I have the inward circumcision and therefore do not need the outward too.” That soul was to be cut off from his people. He had despised, he had broken, God’s everlasting covenant, by despising the seal of it. (Genesis 17:14.) Now, the seal of circumcision was to last among the Jews as long as the law lasted, to which it obliged them. By

plain parity of reason, baptism, which came in its room, must last among Christians as long as the gospel covenant into which it admits, and whereunto it obliges, all nations.

3. This appears also from the original commission which our Lord gave to his Apostles: “Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them. And lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Now, as long as this commission lasted, as long as Christ promised to be with them in the execution of it, so long doubtless were they to execute it, and to baptize as well as to teach. But Christ hath promised to be with them, that is, by his Spirit, in their successors, to the end of the world. So long, therefore, without dispute, it was his design that baptism should remain in his Church.

IV.

1. But the grand question is, Who are the proper subjects of baptism? grown persons only, or infants also? In order to answer this fully, I shall, First, lay down the grounds of infant baptism, taken from Scripture, reason, and primitive, universal practice; and, Secondly, answer the objections against it.

2. As to the grounds of it: If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved, that this original stain cleaves to every child of man; and that hereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation. It is true, the Second Adam has found a remedy for the disease which came upon all by the offense of the first. But the benefit of this is to be received through the means which he hath appointed; through baptism in particular, which is the ordinary means he hath appointed for that purpose; and to which God hath tied us, though he may not have tied himself. Indeed, where it cannot be had, the case is different, but extraordinary cases do not make void a standing rule. This therefore is our First ground. Infants need to be washed from original sin; therefore they are proper subjects of baptism.

3. Secondly. If infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant, then they have a right to baptism, which is the entering seal thereof. But infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant.

The custom of nations and common reason of mankind prove that infants may enter into a covenant, and may be obliged by compacts made by others in their name, and receive advantage by them. But we have stronger proof than this, even God's own word: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord, — your captains, with all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives and the stranger, — that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God." (Deuteronomy 29:10-12.) Now, God would never have made a covenant with little ones, if they had not been capable of it. It is not said children only, but little children, the Hebrew word properly signifying infants. And these may be still, as they were of old, obliged to perform, in after time, what they are not capable of performing at the time of their entering into that obligation.

4. The infants of believers, the true children of faithful Abraham, always were under the gospel covenant. They were included in it, they had a right to it and to the seal of it; as an infant heir has a right to his estate, though he cannot yet have actual possession. The covenant with Abraham was a gospel covenant; the condition the same, namely, faith, which the Apostle observes was "imputed unto him for righteousness." The inseparable fruit of this faith was obedience; for by faith he left his country, and offered his son. The benefits were the same; for God promised "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee:" And he can promise no more to any creature; for this includes all blessings, temporal and eternal. The Mediator is the same; for it was in his Seed, that is, in Christ, (Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16,) that all nations were to be blessed; on which very account the Apostle says, "The gospel was preached unto Abraham." (Galatians 3:8.) Now, the same promise that was made to him, the same covenant that was made with him, was made "with his children after him." (Genesis 17:7; Galatians 3:7.) And upon that account it is called "an everlasting covenant." In this covenant children were also obliged to what they knew not, to the same faith and obedience with Abraham. And so they are still; as they are still equally entitled to all the benefits and promises of it.

5. Circumcision was then the seal of the covenant; which is itself therefore figuratively termed *the covenant*. (Acts 7:8.) Hereby the children of those who professed the true religion were then admitted into it, and obliged to the conditions of it; and when the law was added, to the observance of that also. And when the old seal of circumcision was taken off, this of baptism was added in its room; our Lord appointing one positive institution to succeed another. A new seal was set to Abraham's covenant; the seals differed, but the deed was the same; only that part was struck off which was political or ceremonial. That baptism came in the room of circumcision, appears as well from the clear reason of the thing, as from the Apostle's argument, where, after circumcision, he mentions baptism, as that wherein God had "forgiven us our trespasses;" to which he adds, the "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances," plainly relating to circumcision and other Jewish rites; which as fairly implies, that baptism came in the room of circumcision, as our Savior's styling the other sacrament *the passover*, (Colossians 2:11-13; Luke 22:15,) shows that it was instituted in the place of it. Nor is it any proof that baptism did not succeed circumcision, because it differs in some circumstances, any more than it proves the Lord's supper did not succeed the passover, because in several circumstances it differs from it. This then is a Second ground. Infants are capable of entering into covenant with God. As they always were, so they still are, under the evangelical covenant. Therefore they have a right to baptism, which is now the entering seal thereof.

6. Thirdly. If infants ought to come to Christ, if they are capable of admission into the Church of God, and consequently of solemn sacramental dedication to him, then they are proper subjects of baptism. But infants are capable of coming to Christ, of admission into the Church, and solemn dedication to God.

That infants ought to come to Christ, appears from his own words: "They brought little children to Christ, and the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:13, 14.) St. Luke expresses it still more strongly: "They brought unto him even infants, that he might touch them." (18:15.) These children were so little that they were *brought*

to him; yet he says, “Suffer them to *come* unto me:” So little, that he “took them up in his arms;” yet he rebukes those who would have hindered their coming to him. And his command respected the future as well as the present. Therefore his disciples or Ministers are still to suffer infants to come, that is, to be brought, unto Christ. But they cannot now come to him, unless by being brought into the Church; which cannot be but by baptism. Yea, and “of such,” says our Lord, “is the kingdom of heaven;” not of such only as were like these infants. For if they themselves were not fit to be subjects of that kingdom, how could others be so, because they were like them? Infants, therefore, are capable of being admitted into the Church, and have a right thereto. Even under the Old Testament they were admitted into it by circumcision. And can we suppose they are in a worse condition under the gospel, than they were under the law? and that our Lord would take away any privileges which they then enjoyed? Would he not rather make additions to them? This, then, is a Third ground. Infants ought to come to Christ, and no man ought to forbid them. They are capable of admission into the Church of God. Therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism.

7. Fourthly. If the Apostles baptized infants, then are they proper subjects of baptism. But the Apostles baptized infants, as is plain from the following consideration: The Jews constantly baptized as well as circumcised all infant proselytes. Our Lord, therefore, commanding his Apostles to proselyte or disciple all nations by baptizing them, and not forbidding them to receive infants as well as others, they must needs baptize children also.

That the Jews admitted proselytes by baptism as well as by circumcision, even whole families together, parents and children, we have the unanimous testimony of their most ancient, learned, and authentic writers. The males they received by baptism and circumcision; the women by baptism only. Consequently, the Apostles, unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it, would of course do the same thing.

Indeed, the consequence would hold from circumcision only. For if it was the custom of the Jews, when they gathered proselytes out of all nations, to admit children into the Church by circumcision, though they could not

actually believe the law, or obey it; then the Apostles, making proselytes to Christianity by baptism, could never think of excluding children, whom the Jews always admitted, (the reason for their admission being the same,) unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it. It follows, the Apostles baptized infants. Therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism.

8. If it be objected, “There is no express mention in Scripture of any infants whom the Apostles baptized,” I would ask, Suppose no mention had been made in the Acts of those two women baptized by the Apostles, yet might we not fairly conclude, that when so many thousands, so many entire households, were baptized, women were not excluded? especially since it was the known custom of the Jews to baptize them? The same holds of children; nay, more strongly, on the account of circumcision. Three thousand were baptized by the Apostles in one day, and five thousand in another. And can it be reasonably supposed that there were no children among such vast numbers? Again: The Apostles baptized many families; nay, we hardly read of one master of a family, who was converted and baptized, but his whole family (as was before the custom among the Jews) were baptized with him: Thus the “jailer’s household, he and all his; the household of Gaius, of Stephanas, of Crispus.” And can we suppose, that in all these households, which, we read, were, without exception, baptized, there should not be so much as one child or infant? But to go one step further: St. Peter says to the multitude, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins. For the promise is to you, and to your children.” (Acts 2:38, 39.) Indeed, the answer is made directly to those who asked, “What shall we do?” But it reaches farther than to those who asked the question. And though children could not actually repent, yet they might be baptized. And that they are included, appears,

(1.) Because the Apostle addresses to “every one” of them, and in “every one” children must be contained.

(2.) They are expressly mentioned: “The promise is to you, and to your children.”

9. Lastly. If to baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian Church in all places and in all ages, then this must have been the practice of the Apostles, and, consequently, the mind of Christ. But to

baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian Church, in all places and in all ages. Of this we have unexceptionable witnesses: St. Austin for the Latin Church, who flourished before the year 400; and Origen for the Greek, born in the second century; both declaring, not only that the whole Church of Christ did then baptize infants, but likewise that they received this practice from the Apostles themselves. (*August. de Genesi*, 1. 10, c. 23; *Orig. in Rom.* vi.) St. Cyprian likewise is express for it, and a whole Council with him. (*Epist. ad Fidum.*) If need were, we might cite likewise Athanasius, Chrysostom, and a cloud of witnesses. Nor is there one instance to be found in all antiquity, of any orthodox Christian who denied baptism to children when brought to be baptized; nor any one of the Fathers, or ancient; writers, for the first eight hundred years at least, who held it unlawful. And that it has been the practice of all regular Churches ever since, is clear and manifest. Not only our own ancestors when first converted to Christianity, not only all the European Churches, but the African too and the Asiatic, even those of St. Thomas in the Indies, do, and ever did, baptize their children. The fact being thus cleared, that infant baptism has been the general practice of the Christian Church in all places and in all ages, that it has continued without interruption in the Church of God for above seventeen hundred years, we may safely conclude, it was handed down from the Apostles, who best knew the mind of Christ.

10. To sum up the evidence: If outward baptism be generally, in an ordinary way, necessary to salvation, and infants may be saved as well as adults, nor ought we to neglect any means of saving them; if our Lord commands such to come, to be brought unto him, and declares, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven;” if infants are capable of making a covenant, or having a covenant made for them by others, being included in Abraham’s covenant, (which was a covenant of faith, an evangelical covenant,) and never excluded by Christ; if they have; a right to be members of the Church, and were accordingly members of the Jewish; if, suppose our Lord had designed to exclude them from baptism, he must have expressly forbidden his Apostles to baptize them, (which none dares to affirm he did,) since otherwise they would do it of course, according to the universal practice of their nation; if it is highly probable they did so, even from the letter of Scripture, because they frequently baptized whole households,

and it would be strange if there were no children among them; if the whole Church of Christ, for seventeen hundred years together, baptized infants, and were never opposed till the last century but one, by some not very holy men in Germany; lastly, if there are such inestimable benefits conferred in baptism, the washing away the guilt of original sin, the engrafting us into Christ, by making us members of his Church, and thereby giving us a right to all the blessings of the gospel; it follows, that infants may, yea, ought to be baptized, and that none ought to hinder them.

I am, in the Last place, to answer those objections which are commonly brought against infant baptism: —

1. The chief of these is: “Our Lord said to his Apostles, ‘Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’ (Matthew 28:19.) Here Christ himself put teaching before baptizing. Therefore, infants, being incapable of being taught, are incapable of being baptized.”

I answer,

(1.)The order of words in Scripture is no certain rule for the order of things. We read in St. Mark 1:4: “John baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance;” and, verse 5, “They were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Now, either the order of words in Scripture does not always imply the same order of things; or it follows, that John baptized before his hearers either confessed or repented. But,

(2.)The words are manifestly mistranslated. For if we read, “Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, — teaching them to observe all things,” it makes plain tautology, vain and senseless repetition. It ought to be translated, (which is the literal meaning of the words,) “Go and make disciples of all nations, by baptizing them.” That infants are capable of being made proselytes or disciples has been already proved; therefore this text, rightly translated, is no valid objection against infant baptism.

2. Their next objection is: "The Scripture says, 'Repent and be baptized; believe and be baptized.' Therefore, repentance and faith ought to go before baptism. But infants are incapable of these; therefore they are incapable of baptism."

I answer: Repentance and faith were to go before circumcision, as well as before baptism. Therefore, if this argument held, it would prove just as well, that infants were incapable of circumcision. But we know God himself determined the contrary, commanding them to be circumcised at eight days old. Now, if infants were capable of being circumcised, notwithstanding that repentance and faith were to go before circumcision in grown persons, they are just as capable of being baptized; notwithstanding that repentance and faith are, in grown persons, to go before baptism. This objection, therefore, is of no force; for it is as strong against circumcision of infants as infant baptism.

3. It is objected, Thirdly, "There is no command for it in Scripture. Now, God was angry with his own people, because they did that which, he said, 'I commanded them not.' (Jeremiah 7:31) One plain text would end all the dispute."

I answer, (1.) We have reason to fear it would not. It is as positively commanded in a very plain text of Scripture, that we should "teach and admonish one another with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with grace in our hearts," (Ephesians 5:19,) as it is to honor our father and mother: But does this put an end to all dispute? Do not these very persons absolutely refuse to do it, notwithstanding a plain text, an express command?

I answer, (2.) They themselves practice what there is neither express command nor clear example for in Scripture. They have no express command for baptizing women. They say, indeed, "Women are implied in 'all nations.'" They are; and so are infants too: But the command is not express for either. And for admitting women to the Lord's supper, they have neither express command nor clear example. Yet they do it continually, without either one or the other. And they are justified therein

by the plain reason of the thing. This also justifies as in baptizing infants, though without express command or clear example.

If it be said, “But there is a command, ‘Let a man,’ *ἄνθρωπος*, ‘examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread;’ (1 Corinthians 11:28;) the word ‘man,’ in the original, signifying indifferently either men or women:” I grant it does in other places; but here the word “himself,” immediately following, confines it to men only. “But women are implied in it, though not expressed.” Certainly; and so are infants in “all nations.”

“But we have Scripture example for it: For it is said in the Acts, ‘The Apostles continued in prayer and supplication with the women.’” True, in prayer and supplication; but it is not said, “in communicating:” Nor have we one clear example of it in the Bible.

Since, then, they admit women to the communion, without any express command or example, but only by consequence from Scripture, they can never show reason why infants should not be admitted to baptism, when there are so many scriptures which by fair consequence show they have a right to it, and are capable of it.

As for the texts wherein God reproves his people for doing “what he commanded them not;” that phrase evidently means, what he had forbidden; particularly in that passage of Jeremiah. The whole verse is, “They have built the high places of Tophet, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not.” Now, God had expressly forbidden them to do this; and that on pain of death. But surely there is a difference between the Jews offering their sons and daughters to devils, and Christians offering theirs to God.

On the whole, therefore, it is not only lawful and innocent, but meet, right, and our bounden duty, in conformity to the uninterrupted practice of the whole Church of Christ from the earliest ages, to consecrate our children to God by baptism, as the Jewish Church were commanded to do by circumcision.

November 11, 1756.

AN EXTRACT

FROM

“A SHORT VIEW OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN, (SO CALLED,) AND THE REV. MR. JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.”

TO THE READER.

As those who are under the direction of Count Zinzendorf (vulgarly called Moravian Brethren) are the most plausible, and therefore far the most dangerous, of all the Antinomians now in England, I first endeavor to guard such as are simple of heart against being taken by those cunning hunters.

THE difference between the Moravian doctrine and ours (in this respect) lies here: —

They believe and teach, —

“1. That Christ has done all which was necessary for the salvation of all mankind.

“2. That, consequently, we are to do nothing, as necessary to salvation, but simply to believe in him.

“3. That there is but one duty now, but one command, viz., to believe in Christ.

“4. That Christ has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly ‘abolished the law;’ that a believer is therefore ‘free from the law,’ is not obliged thereby to do or omit anything; it being inconsistent with his liberty to do anything as commanded.

“5. That we are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more nor less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification, and entire justification, being in one and the same instant.

“6. That a believer is never sanctified or holy in himself, but in Christ only; he has no holiness in himself at all, all his holiness being imputed, not inherent.

“7. That if a man regards prayer, or searching the Scriptures, or communicating, as matter of duty; if he judges himself obliged to do these things, or is troubled when he does them not; he is in bondage; he has no faith at all, but is seeking salvation by the works of the law.”

We believe that the first of these propositions is ambiguous, and all the rest utterly false.

“1. Christ has done all that was necessary for the salvation of all mankind.”

This is ambiguous. Christ has not done all which was necessary for the absolute salvation of all mankind. For notwithstanding all that Christ has done, he that believeth not shall be damned. But he has done all which was necessary for the conditional salvation of all mankind; that is, if they believe; for through his merits all that believe to the end, with the faith that worketh by love, shall be saved.

“2. We are to do nothing as necessary to salvation, but simply to believe in Him.”

If we allow the Count’s definition of faith, namely, “the historical knowledge of this truth, that Christ has been a man and suffered death for

us,” (*Sixteen Discourses*, p. 57,) then is this proposition directly subversive of the whole revelation of Jesus Christ.

“3. There is but one duty now, but one command, viz., to believe in Christ.”

Almost every page in the New Testament proves the falsehood of this assertion.

“4. Christ has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly abolished the law.”

How absolutely contrary is this to his own solemn declaration! — “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. One jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till heaven and earth pass.”

“Therefore a believer is free from the law.” That he is “free from the curse of the law,” we know; and that he is “free from the law,” or power, “of sin and death.” But where is it written that he is free from the law of God?

“He is not obliged thereby to do or omit anything, it being inconsistent with his liberty to do anything as commanded.”

So your liberty is a liberty to disobey God; whereas ours is a liberty to obey him in all things: So grossly, while we “establish the law,” do you “make void the law through faith!”

“5. We are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more nor less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification and entire justification being in one and the same instant.”

Just the contrary appears both from the tenor of God’s word, and the experience of his children.

“6. A believer is never sanctified or holy in himself, but in Christ only. He has no holiness in himself at all; all his holiness being imputed, not inherent.”

Scripture holiness is the image of God; the mind which was in Christ; the love of God and man; lowliness, gentleness, temperance, patience, chastity. And do you coolly affirm, that this is only imputed to a believer, and that he has none at all of this holiness in him? Is temperance imputed only to him that is a drunkard still; or chastity, to her that goes on in whoredom? Nay, but a believer is really chaste and temperate. And if so, he is thus far holy in himself.

Does a believer love God, or does he not? If he does, he has the love of God in him. Is he lowly, or meek, or patient at all? If he is, he has these tempers in himself; and if he has them not in himself, he is not lowly, or meek, or patient. You cannot therefore deny, that every believer has holiness in, though not from, himself; else you deny, that he is holy at all; and if so, he cannot see the Lord.

And indeed, if holiness in general be the mind which was in Christ, what can any one possibly mean by, “A believer is not holy in himself, but in Christ only? that the mind which was in Christ is in a believer also; but it is in Him, — not in himself, but in Christ! “What a heap of palpable self-contradiction, what; senseless jargon, is this!

“7. If a man regards prayer, or searching the Scriptures, or communicating, as matter of duty; if he judges himself obliged to do these things, or is troubled when he does them not, he is ‘in bondage,’ he has no faith at all, but is seeking salvation by the works of the law.”

Thus obedience with you is a proof of unbelief, and disobedience a proof of faith! What is it, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness, if this is not?

PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED

THAT to the height of this great argument,
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God with man.

— MILTON.

1. I AM inclined to believe, that many of those who enjoy the “faith which worketh by love,” may remember some time when the power of the Highest wrought upon them in an eminent manner; when the voice of the Lord laid the mountains low, brake all the rocks in pieces, and mightily shed abroad his love in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto them. And at that time it is certain they had no power to resist the grace of God. They were then no more able to stop the course of that torrent which carried all before it, than to stem the waves of the sea with their hand, or to stay the sun in the midst of heaven.

2. And the children of God may continually observe how his love leads them on from faith to faith; with what tenderness He watches over their souls; with what care He brings them back if they go astray, and then upholds their going in his path, that their footsteps may not slide. They cannot but observe how unwilling He is to let them go from serving him; and how, notwithstanding the stubbornness of their wills, and the wildness of their passions, he goes on in his work, conquering and to conquer, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

3. The farther this work is carried on in their hearts, the more earnestly do they cry out, “Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give the praise, for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake!” the more deeply are they convinced that “by grace we are saved, not of works, lest any man should boast;”

that we are not pardoned and accepted with God for the sake of anything we have done, but wholly and solely for the sake of Christ, of what he hath done and suffered for us; the more assuredly likewise do they know, that the condition of this acceptance is faith alone; before which gift of God no good work can be done, none which hath not in it the nature of sin.

4. How easily then may a believer infer, from what he hath experienced in his own soul, that the true grace of God always works irresistibly in every believer! that God will finish wherever he has begun this work, so that it is impossible for any believer to fall from grace! and, lastly, that the reason why God gives this to some only and not to others, is, because, of his own will, without any previous regard either to their faith or works, he hath absolutely, unconditionally, predestined them to life, before the foundation of the world!

5. Agreeable hereto, in “The Protestant Confession of faith,” drawn up at Paris, in the year 1559, we have these words: —

“We believe, that out of the general corruption and condemnation in which all men are plunged, God draws those whom, in his eternal and unalterable counsel, he has elected by his own goodness and mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without considering their works, leaving the others in the same corruption and condemnation.” (Article 12.)

6. To the same effect speak the Dutch Divines, assembled at Dort in the year 1618. Their words are: —

“Whereas, in process of time, God bestowed faith on some, and not on others, — this proceeds from his eternal decree; according to which, he softens the hearts of the elect, and leaveth them that are not elect in their wickedness and hardness.

“And herein is discovered the difference put between men equally lost; that is to say, the decree of election and reprobation.

“Election is the unchangeable decree of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, he hath chosen in Christ unto salvation a set

number of men. This election is one and the same of all wish are to be saved.

“Not all men are elected, but some not elected; whom God, in his unchangeable good pleasure, hath decreed to leave in the common misery, and not to bestow saving faith upon them; but leaving them in their own ways, at last to condemn and punish them everlastingly, for their unbelief, and also for their other sins. And this is the decree of reprobation.”
(Article 6, *et seq.*)

7. Likewise in “The Confession of Faith” set forth by the Assembly of English and Scotch Divines, in the year 1646, are these words: —

“God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.

“By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.

“These angels and men thus predestined and fore-ordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

“Those of mankind that are predestined unto life, God, before the foundation of the world, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith or good works.

“The rest of mankind God was pleased, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath.” (Chapter 3.)

No less express are Mr. Calvin’s words, in his “Christian Institutions:”—

“All men are not created for the same end; but some are fore-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation. So according as every man was created for the one end or the other, we say, he was elected, that is,

predestined to life, or reprobated, that is, predestined to damnation.” (Cap. 21, sec. 1.)

8. Indeed there are some who assert the decree of election, and not the decree of reprobation. They assert that God hath, by a positive, unconditional decree, chosen some to life and salvation; but not that he hath by any such decree devoted the rest of mankind to destruction. These are they to whom I would address myself first. And let me beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to lift up your hearts to him, and to beg of him to free you from all prepossession, from the prejudices even of your tender years, and from whatsoever might hinder the light of God from shining in upon your souls. Let us calmly and fairly weigh these things in the balance of the sanctuary. And let all be done in love and meekness of Wisdom, as becomes those who are fighting under one Captain, and who humbly hope they are joint-heirs through him of the glory which shall be revealed.

I am verily persuaded, that, in the uprightness of your hearts, you defend the decree of unconditional election; even in the same uprightness wherein you reject and abhor that of unconditional reprobation. But consider, I intreat you, whether you are consistent with yourselves; consider, whether this election can be separate from reprobation; whether one of them does not imply the other, so that, in holding one, you must hold both.

9. That this was the judgment of those who had the most deeply considered the nature of these decrees, of the Assembly of English and Scotch Divines, of the Reformed Churches both in France and the Low Countries, and of Mr. Calvin himself, appears from their own words, beyond all possibility of contradiction. “Out of the general corruption,” saith the French Church, “he draws those whom he hath elected; leaving the others in the same corruption, according to his immovable decree.” “By the decree of God,” says the Assembly of English and Scotch Divines, “some are predestinated unto everlasting life, others fore-ordained to everlasting death.” “God hath once for all,” saith Mr. Calvin, “appointed, by an eternal and unchangeable decree, to whom he would give salvation and whom he would devote to destruction.” (*Inst.*, cap. 3,

sec. 7.) Nay, it is observable, Mr. Calvin speaks with utter contempt and disdain of all who endeavor to separate one from the other, who assert election without reprobation. "Many," says he, "as it were to excuse God, own election, and deny reprobation. But this is quite silly and childish. For election cannot stand without reprobation. Whom God passes by, those he reprobates. It is one and the same thing." (*Inst.*, 1. 3, c. 23, sec. 1.)

10. Perhaps upon deeper consideration, you will find yourself of the same judgment. It may be, you also hold reprobation, though you know it not;. Do not you believe, that God who made "one vessel unto honor," hath made "another unto" eternal "dishonor?" Do not you believe, that the men who "turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, were before ordained of God unto this condemnation?" Do not you think, that for "this same purpose God raised Pharaoh up, that he might show his sovereign power in his destruction?" and that "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," refers to their eternal state? Why, then, you hold absolute reprobation, and you think Esau and Pharaoh were instances of it, as well as all those "vessels made unto dishonor," those men "before ordained into condemnation."

11. To set this matter in a still clearer light, you need only answer one question: Is any man saved who is not elected? Is it possible, that any not elected should be saved? If you say, "No," you put an end to the doubt. You espouse election and reprobation together. You confirm Mr. Calvin's words, that "without reprobation, election itself cannot stand." You allow, (though you was not sensible of it before,) that "whom God elects not, them he reprobates."

Try whether it be possible, in any particular case, to separate election from reprobation. Take one of those who are supposed not to be elected; one whom God hath not chosen unto life and salvation. Can this man be saved from sin and hell? You answer, "No." Why not? "Because he is not elected. Because God hath unchangeably decreed to save so many souls, and no more; and he is not of that number. Him God hath decreed to pass by; to leave him to everlasting destruction; in consequence of which

irresistible decree, the man perishes everlastingly.” O, my brethren, how small is the difference between this, and a broad, barefaced reprobation!

12. Let me intreat you to make this case your own. In the midst of life, you are in death; your soul is dead while you live, if you live in sin, if you do not live to God. And who can deliver you from the body of this death? Only the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. But God hath decreed to give this grace to others only, and not to you; to leave you in unbelief and spiritual death, and for that unbelief to punish you with death everlasting. Well then mayest thou cry, even till thy throat is dry, “O wretched man that I am!” For an unchangeable, irresistible decree standeth between thee and the very possibility of salvation. Go now and find out how to split the hair between thy being reprobated and not elected; how to separate reprobation, in its most effectual sense, from unconditional election!

13. Acknowledge then that you hold reprobation. Avow it in the face of the sun. To be consistent with yourself, you must openly assert, that “without reprobation this election cannot stand.” You know it cannot. You know, if God hath fixed a decree that these men only shall be saved, in such a decree it is manifestly implied, that all other men shall be damned. If God hath decreed that this part of mankind, and no more, shall live eternally, you cannot but see it is therein decreed, that the other part shall never see life. O let us deal ingenuously with each other! What we really hold, let us openly profess. And if reprobation be the truth, it will bear the light; for “the word of our God shall stand forever.”

14. Now then, without any extenuation on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other, let us look upon this doctrine, call it what you please, naked and in its native color. Before the foundations of the world were laid, God of his own mere will and pleasure fixed a decree concerning all the children of men why should be born unto the end of the world. This decree was unchangeable with regard to God, and irresistible with regard to man. And herein it was ordained, that one part of mankind should be saved from sin and hell, and all the rest left to perish forever and ever, without help, without hope. That none of these should have that grace which alone could prevent their dwelling with everlasting burnings, God decreed, for this

cause alone, “because it was his good pleasure;” and for this end, “to show forth his glorious power, and his sovereignty over all the earth.”

15. Now, can you, upon reflection, believe this? Perhaps you will say, “I do not think about it.” That will never do. You not only think about it, (though it may be confusedly,) but speak about it too, whenever you speak of unconditional election. You do not think about it! What do you mean? Do you never think about Esau or Pharaoh? or, in general, about a certain number of souls whom alone God hath decreed to save? Why, in that; very thought reprobation lurks; it entered your heart the moment that entered: It stays as long as that stays; and you cannot speak that thought, without speaking of reprobation. True, it is covered with fig-leaves, so that a heedless eye may not observe it to be there. But, if you narrowly observe, unconditional election cannot appear without the cloven foot of reprobation.

16. “But do not the Scriptures speak of election? They say, St. Paul was ‘an elected or chosen vessel;’ nay, and speak of great numbers of men as ‘elect according to the foreknowledge of God.’ You cannot, therefore, deny there is such a thing as election. And, if there is, what do you mean by it?”

I will tell you, in all plainness and simplicity. I believe it commonly means one of these two things: First, a divine appointment of some particular men, to do some particular work in the world. And this election I believe to be not only personal, but absolute and unconditional. Thus Cyrus was elected to rebuild the temple, and St. Paul, with the twelve, to preach the gospel. But I do not find this to have any necessary connection with eternal happiness. Nay, it is plain it has not; for one who is elected in this sense lay yet be lost eternally. “Have I not chosen” (elected) “you twelve?” saith our Lord; “yet one of you hath a devil.” Judas, you see, was elected as well as the rest; yet is his lot with the devil and his angels.

17. I believe election means, Secondly, a divine appointment of some men to eternal happiness. But I believe this election to be conditional, as well as the reprobation opposite thereto. I believe the eternal decree concerning both is expressed in those words: “He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” And this decree, without doubt, God will

not change, and man cannot resist. According to this, all true believers are in Scripture termed elect, as all who continue in unbelief are so long properly reprobates, that is, unapproved of God, and without discernment touching the things of the Spirit.

18. Now, God, to whom all things are present at once, who sees all eternity at one view, “calleth the things that are not as though they were;” the things that are not yet as though they were now subsisting. Thus he calls Abraham the “father of many nations,” before even Isaac was born. And thus Christ is called “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;” though he was not slain, in fact, till some thousand years after. In like manner, God calleth true believers, “elect from the foundation of the world;” although they were not actually elect, or believers, till many ages after, in their several generations. Then only it was that they were actually elected, when they were made the “sons of God by faith.” Then were they, in fact, “chosen and taken out of the world; elect,” saith St. Paul, “through belief of the truth;” or, as St. Peter expresses it, “elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit.”

19. This election I as firmly believe, as I believe the Scripture to be of God. But unconditional election I cannot believe; not only because I cannot find it in Scripture, but also (to wave all other considerations) because it necessarily implies unconditional reprobation. Find out any election which does not imply reprobation, and I will gladly agree to it. But reprobation I can never agree to while I believe the Scripture to be of God; as being utterly irreconcilable to the whole scope and tenor both of the Old and New Testament.

O that God would give me the desire of my heart! that he would grant the thing which I long for I even that your mind might now be free and calm, and open to the light of his Spirit! that you would impartially consider how it is possible to reconcile reprobation with the following Scriptures:

“Because thou hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt; not eat of it; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”

(Genesis 3:17.) The curse shall come on thee and thine offspring, not because of any absolute decree of mine, but because of thy sin.

“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” (Genesis 4:7.) Sin only, not the decree of reprobation, hinders thy being accepted.

“Know that the Lord thy God, he is the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them. Wherefore, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant which he sware unto thy fathers.” (Deuteronomy 7:9, 12.) “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God; and a curse, if you will not obey.” (11:26, 27, 28.) “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and the Lord thy God shall bless thee. But if thou wilt not hear, I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish. I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.” (30:15, etc.)

“And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah, and he said, The Lord is with you while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him he will forsake you.” (2 Chronicles 15:1, 2.)

“After all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass; should we again break thy commandments, wouldest thou not be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us? “(Ezra 9:13, 14.)

“Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any.” (Job 36:5.) Could he then reprobate any?

“The Lord is good to all: And his tender mercies are over all his works.” (Psalm 145:9.)

“Turn you at my reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.” (Proverbs 1:23, etc.) Why? because of my decree? No; but “because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.”

“I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people; a people that provoked me to anger continually to my face. Therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom. Ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer. Therefore, ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name.” (Isaiah 65:2, etc.)

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear” (eternally) “the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord; and not that he should return from his ways, and live?” (Ezekial 18:20, 23.)

“Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.” (Matthew 7:26.) Nay, he could not help it, if he was ordained thereto.

“Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Who unto thee, Chorazin! Wo unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (What, if they were not elected? And if they of Bethsaida had been elected, would they not have repented too?)

“Therefore I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell. For if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.” (Matthew 11:20, etc.)

“The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: Because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” (12:41.) But what was this to the purpose, if the men of Nineveh were elected, and this generation of men were not?

“It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given. For whosoever hath,” (that is, uses what he hath,) “to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.” (13:11, 12.)

“They which were called were not worthy,” (22:8,) were shut out from the marriage of the Lamb: — Why so? Because “they would not come.” (Verse 3.)

The whole twenty-fifth chapter requires, and will reward, your most serious consideration. If you can reconcile unconditional reprobation with this, you may reconcile it with the eighteenth of Ezekiel.

“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love” (or choose) “darkness rather than light.” (John 3:19.)

“How can ye believe, who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh of God?” (5:44.) Observe the reason why they could not believe: It is not in God, but in themselves.

“Thy money perish with thee!” (And so doubtless it did.) “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” (Acts 8:20, etc.) So that St. Peter had no thought of any absolute reprobation even in the case of Simon Magus.

“They are without excuse; because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God — wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness — who changed the truth of God into a lie. — For this cause God gave them up to vile affections. — As they did not like to retain God in their

knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” (Romans 1:20, etc.)

“Them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, to believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thessolonians 2:10, etc.)

20. How will you reconcile reprobation with the following scriptures, which declare God’s willingness that all should be saved?

“As many as ye shall find, bid” (invite) “to the marriage.” (Matthew 22:9.)

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15.)

“And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If” (rather, *O that*) “thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!” (Luke 19:41, etc.)

“These things I say, that ye may be saved,” (John 5:34,) viz., those who persecuted him, and “sought to slay him,” (verse 16,) and of whom he complains, “Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life.” (Verse 40.)

“God that made the world and all things therein — giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth — That they should seek the Lord.” (Acts 17:24.) Observe, this was God’s end in creating all nations on all the earth.

“As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” (Romans 5:18.) “The same Lord over all is rich” (in mercy) “unto all that call upon him.” (10:12.)

“This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who willeth all men to be saved.” (1 Timothy 2:3, 4.) “Who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe;” (6:10;) that is, intentionally of all, and actually of believers.

“If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.” (James 1:5.)

“The Lord is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9.)

“We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” (1 John 4:14)

21. How will you reconcile reprobation with the following scriptures, which declare that Christ came to save all men; that he died for all; that he atoned for all, even for those that finally perish?

“The Son of man is come to save that which is lost,” (Matthew 18:11,) without any restriction.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) “God sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved.” (3:17.) “I came not” (now) “to judge the world, but to save the world.” (12:47.)

“Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” (Romans 14:15.)

“Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom, Christ died.” (1 Corinthians 8:11.)

“We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that those” (or all) “who live should live unto Him which died for them.” (2 Corinthians 5:14, etc.) Here you see, not only that Christ died for all men, but likewise the end of his dying for them.

“Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.” (1 Timothy 2:6.)

“We see Jesus made lower than the angels, that he might taste death for every man.” (Hebrews 2:9.)

“There shall be false teachers among you, who shall privately bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” (2 Peter 2:1.) You see he bought or redeemed even those that perish, that bring upon themselves swift destruction.

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins” (who are elect, according to the knowledge of God) “and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:1, 2.)

You are sensible, these are but a very small part of the scriptures which might be brought on each of these heads. But they are enough; and they require no comment: Taken in their plain, easy, and obvious sense, they abundantly prove, that there is not, cannot be, any such thing as unconditional reprobation.

22. But to be a little more particular: How can you possibly reconcile reprobation with those scriptures that declare the justice of God? To cite one for all:

“What mean ye that ye use this proverb, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine;” (and however I may temporally visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, yet this visitation extends no farther; but) “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,” for its own sin, and not another’s. “But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God. If he beget a son which is a robber, shall he then live? He shall not live, — he shall surely die. Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?” (Temporally he doth, as in the case of Achan, Korah, and a thousand others; but not eternally.) When the son hath done that which is

lawful and right, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die; “shall die the second death.” The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O Israel. Is not my way equal?” (equitable, just?) “Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions. So iniquity shall not be your ruin.” (Ezekiel 18:2, etc.)

Through this whole passage God is pleased to appeal to man himself touching the justice of His proceedings. And well might he appeal to our own conscience, according to the account of them which is here given. But it is an account which all the art of man will never reconcile with unconditional reprobation.

23. Do you think it will cut the knot to say, “Why, if God might justly have passed by all men,” (speak out, “If God might justly have reprobated all men,”— for it comes to the same point,) “then he may justly pass by some: But God might justly have passed by all men?” Are you sure he might? Where is it written? I cannot find it in the word of God. Therefore I reject it as a bold, precarious assertion, utterly unsupported by Holy Scripture.

If you say, “But you know in your own conscience, God might justly have passed by you:” I deny it. That God might justly, for my unfaithfulness to his grace, have given me up long ago, I grant: But this concession supposes me to have had that grace which you say a reprobate never had.

But besides, in making this supposition, of what God might have justly done, you suppose his justice might have been separate from his other

attributes, from his mercy in particular. But this never was, nor ever will be; nor indeed is it possible it should. All his attributes are inseparably joined: They cannot be divided, no, not for a moment. Therefore this whole argument stands, not only on an unscriptural, but on an absurd, impossible supposition.

24. Do you say, “Nay, but it is just for God to pass by whom he will, because of his sovereignty; for he saith himself, ‘May not I do what I will with my own?’ and, ‘Hath not the potter power over his own clay?’” I answer, The former of these sentences stands in the conclusion of that parable, (Matthew 20) wherein our Lord reproves the Jews for murmuring at God’s giving the same reward to the Gentiles as to them. To one of these murmurers it is that God says, “Friend, I do thee no wrong. Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even as unto thee.” Then follows: “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” As if he had said, “May I not give my own kingdom to whom I please? Art thou angry because I am merciful?” It is then undeniably clear, that God does not here assert a right of reprobating any man. Here is nothing spoken of reprobation, bad or good. Here is no kind of reference thereto. This text therefore has nothing to do with the conclusion it was brought to prove.

25. But you add: “Hath not the potter power over his own clay?” Let us consider the context of these words also. They are found in the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; an Epistle, the general scope and intent of which is, to publish the eternal, unchangeable **προθεσις**, purpose or decree of God, “He that believeth, shall be saved: He that believeth not shall be damned.” The justice of God in condemning those that believed not, and the necessity of believing in order to salvation, the Apostle proves at large in the three first chapters, which he confirms in the fourth by the example of Abraham. In the former part of the fifth and in the sixth chapter, he describes the happiness and holiness of true believers. (The latter part of the fifth is a digression, concerning the extent of the benefits flowing from the death of Christ.) In the seventh he shows in what sense believers in Christ are delivered from the law; and describes the miserable bondage of those who are still under the law; that is, who are truly convinced of sin, but not able to conquer it. In the eighth he again describes

the happy liberty of those who truly believe in Christ; and encourages them to suffer for the faith, as by other considerations, so by this in particular, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called” (by the preaching of his word) “according to his purpose,” (verse 28,) or decree, unalterably fixed from eternity, “He that believeth shall be saved.” “For whom he did fore know” as believing, “he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called,” by his word; (so that term is usually taken in St. Paul’s Epistles;) “and whom he called, them he also justified;” (the word is here taken in its wildest sense, as including sanctification also;) “and whom he justified, them he glorified.” Thence to the end of the chapter, he strongly encourages all those who had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, to have a good hope, that no sufferings should ever “be able to separate them from the loves of God which is in Christ Jesus.”

26. But as the Apostle was aware how deeply the Jews were offended at the whole tenor of his doctrine, and more especially at his asserting,

- (1.) That the Jews themselves could not; be saved without believing in Jesus; and,
- (2.) That the Heathens by believing in him might partake of the same salvation; he spends the whole ninth chapter upon them;

Wherein,

- (1.) He declares the tender love he had for them. (Verses 1-3.)
 - (2) Allows the great national privileges they enjoyed above any people under heaven. (Verses 4, 5.)
 - (3.) Answers their grand objection to his doctrine, taken from the justice of God to their fathers. (Verses 6-13.)
 - (4.) Removes another objection, taken from the justice of God; interweaving all along strong reproofs to the Jews, for priding themselves on those privileges which were owing merely to the good pleasure of God, not to their fathers’ goodness, any more than their own. (Verses 14-23.)
 - (5.) Resumes and proves by Scripture his former assertion, that many Jews would be lost, and many Heathens saved. (Verses 24-29.)
- And, lastly, sums up the general drift of this chapter, and indeed of the whole Epistle. “What shall we say then?” What is the

conclusion from the whole? the sum of all which has been spoken? Why, that many Gentiles already partake of the great salvation, and many Jews fall short of it. Wherefore? Because they would not receive it by faith. And whosoever believeth not, cannot be saved; whereas, “whosoever believeth in Christ,” whether Jew or Gentile, “shall not be ashamed.” (Verses 30-33.)

27. Those words, “Hath not the potter power over his own clay?” are part of St. Paul’s answer to that objection, That it was unjust for God to show that mercy to the Gentiles which he withheld from his own people. This he first simply denies, saying, “God forbid!” And then observes, that, according to his own words to Moses, God has a right to fix the terms on which he will show mercy, which neither the will nor the power of man can alter; (verses 15, 16;) and to withdraw his mercy from them who, like Pharaoh, will not comply with those terms. (Verse 17.) And that accordingly “he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy,” namely, those that truly believe; “and whom he will,” namely, obstinate unbelievers, he suffers to be “hardened.”

28. But “why then,” say the objectors, “doth he find fault” with those that are hardened? “for who hath resisted his will?” (Verse 19.) To this insolent misconstruction of what he had said, the Apostle first gives a severe rebuke; and then adds, “Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” Why hast thou made me capable of salvation only on those terms? None indeed hath resisted this will of God. “He that believeth not, shall be damned.” But is this any ground for arraigning his justice? “Hath not” the great “Potter power over his own clay to make,” or appoint, one sort of “vessels,” namely, believers, “to honor, and” the others “to dishonor?” Hath he not a right to distribute eternal honor and dishonor, on whatever terms he pleases? especially, considering the goodness and patience he shows, even towards them that believe not; considering that when they have provoked him “to show his wrath, and to make the power” of his vengeance “known, yet” he “endures, with much longsuffering,” even those “vessels of wrath,” who had before “fitted” themselves “to destruction.” There is then no more room to reply against God, for making his vengeance known on those vessels of wrath, than for “making known” his glorious love “on the

vessels of mercy whom he had before” by faith “prepared for glory; even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.”

29. I have spoken more largely than I designed, in order to show, that neither our Lord, in the above-mentioned parable, nor St. Paul, in these words, had any view to God’s sovereign power, as the ground of unconditional reprobation. And beware you go no further therein, than you are authorized by them. Take care, whenever you speak of these high things, to “speak as the oracles of God.” And if so, you will never speak of the sovereignty of God, but in conjunction with his other attributes. For the Scripture nowhere speaks of this single attribute, as separate from the rest. Much less does it anywhere speak of the sovereignty of God as singly disposing the eternal states of men. No, no; in this awful work, God proceeds according to the known rules of his justice and mercy; but never assigns his sovereignty as the cause why any man is punished with everlasting destruction.

30. Now then, are you not quite out of your way? You are not in the way which God hath revealed. You are putting eternal happiness and misery on an unscriptural and a very dreadful footing. Make the case your own: Here are you, a sinner, convinced that you deserve the damnation of hell. Sorrow, therefore, and fear have filled your heart. And how shall you be comforted? By the promises of God? But perhaps you have no part therein; for they belong only to the elect. By the consideration of his love and tender mercy? But what are these to you, if you are a reprobate? God does not love you at all; you, like Esau, he hath hated even from eternity. What ground then can you have for the least shadow of hope? Why, it is possible, (that is all,) that God’s sovereign will may be on your side. Possibly God may save you, because he will! O poor encouragement to despairing sinners! I fear “faith” rarely “cometh by hearing” this!

31. The sovereignty of God is then never to be brought to supersede his justice. And this is the present objection against unconditional reprobation; (the plain consequence of unconditional election;) it flatly contradicts, indeed utterly overthrows, the Scripture account of the justice of God. This has been proved in general already; let us now weigh a few particulars. And, (1.) The Scripture describes God as the Judge of the

earth. But how shall God in justice judge the world? (O consider this, as in the presence of God, with reverence and godly fear!) How shall God in justice judge the world, if there be any decree of reprobation? On this supposition, what should those on the left hand be condemned for? For their having done evil? They could not help it. There never was a time when they could have helped it. God, you say, “of old ordained them to this condemnation.” And “who hath resisted his will?” He “sold” them, you say, “to work wickedness,” even from their mother’s womb. He “gave them up to a reprobate mind,” or ever they hung upon their mother’s breast. Shall he then condemn them for what they could not help? Shall the Just, the Holy One of Israel, adjudge millions of men to everlasting pain, because their blood moved in their veins? Nay, this they might have helped, by putting an end to their own lives. But could they even thus have escaped from sin? Not without that grace which you suppose God had absolutely determined ever to give them. And yet you suppose him to send them into eternal fire, for not escaping from sin! that is, in plain terms, for not having that grace which God had decreed they should never have! O strange justice! What a picture do you draw of the Judge of all the earth!

32. Are they not rather condemned for not doing good, according to those solemn words of the great Judge, “Depart, ye cursed; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; a stranger, and ye took me not in; I was naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer.” But how much better an answer do you put into their mouths! Upon your supposition, might they not say, (O consider it well, in meekness and fear!) “Lord, we might have done the outward work; but thou knowest it would have but increased our damnation. We might have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, and covered the naked with a garment. But all these works, without thy special grace, which we never had, nor possibly could have, seeing thou hast eternally decreed to withhold it from us, would only have been splendid sins. They would only have heated the furnace of hell seven times hotter than before.” Upon your supposition, might they not say, “Righteous art thou, O Lord; yet let us plead with thee. O, why dost thou condemn us for not doing good? Was it possible for us to do anything well? Did we ever abuse the power of doing good?

We never received it, and that thou knowest. Wilt thou, the Holy One, the Just, condemn us for not doing what we never had the power to do? Wilt thou condemn us for not casting down the stars from heaven? for not holding the winds in our fist? Why, it was as possible for us to do this, as to do any work acceptable in thy sight! O Lord, correct us, but with judgment! And, before thou plungest us into everlasting fire, let us know how it was ever possible for us to escape the damnation of hell."

33. Or, how could they have escaped (suppose you assign that; as the cause of their condemnation) from inward sin, from evil desires, from unholy tempers and vile affections? Were they ever able to deliver their own souls, to rescue themselves from this inward hell? If so, their not doing it might justly be laid to their charge, and would leave them without excuse. But it was not so; they never were able to deliver their own sons; they never had the power to rescue themselves from the hands of these bosom enemies. This talent was never put into their hands. How then can they be condemned for hiding it in the earth, for non-improvement of what they never had? Who is able to purify a corrupt heart; to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Is man, mere man, sufficient for this? No, certainly. God alone. To him only can the polluted of heart say, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But what, if he answer, "I will not, because I will not: Be thou unclean still?" Will God doom that man to the bottomless pit, because of that uncleanness which he could not save himself from, and which God could have saved him from, but would not? Verily, were an earthly King to execute such justice as this upon his helpless subjects, it might well be expected that the vengeance of the Lord would soon sweep him from the face of the earth.

34. Perhaps you will say, They are not condemned for actual but for original sin. What do you mean by this term? The inward corruption of our nature? If so, it has been spoken of before. Or do you mean, the sin which Adam committed in paradise? That this is imputed to all men, I allow; yea, that by reason hereof "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." But that any will be damned for this alone, I allow not, till you show me where it is written. Bring me plain proof from Scripture, and I submit; but till then I utterly deny it.

35. Should you not rather say, that unbelief is the damning sin? and that those who are condemned in that day will be therefore condemned, “because they believed not on the name of the only-begotten Son of God?” But could they believe? Was not this faith both the gift and the work of God in the soul? And was it not a gift which he had eternally decreed never to give them? Was it not a work which he was of old unchangeably determined never to work in their souls? Shall these men be condemned, because God would not work; because they did not receive what God would not give? Could they “ungrasp the hold of his right hand, or force omnipotence?”

36. There is, over and above, a peculiar difficulty here. You say, Christ did not die for these men. But if so, there was an impossibility, in the very nature of the thing, that they should ever savingly believe. For what is saving faith, but “a confidence in God through Christ, that loved me, and gave himself for me?” Loved thee, thou reprobate! gave himself for thee! Away! thou hast neither part nor lot herein. Thou believe in Christ, thou accursed spirit! damned or ever thou wert born! There never was any object for thy faith; there never was any thing for thee to believe. God himself, (thus must you speak, to be consistent with yourself,) with all his omnipotence, could not make thee believe Christ atoned for thy sins, unless he had made thee believe a lie.

37. If then God be just, there cannot, on your scheme, be any judgment to come. We may add, nor any future state, either of reward or punishment. If there be such a state, God will therein “render to every man according to his works. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil.”

But how is this reconcilable with your scheme? You say, The reprobates cannot but do evil; and that the elect, from the day of God’s power, cannot but continue in well-doing. You suppose all this is unchangeably decreed; in consequence whereof, God acts irresistibly on the one, and Satan on the other. Then it is impossible for either one or the other to help acting as they do; or rather, to help being acted upon, in the manner

wherein they are. For if we speak properly, neither the one nor the other can be said to act at all. Can a stone be said to act, when it is thrown out of a sling? or a ball, when it is projected from a cannon? No more can a man be said to act, if he be only moved by a force he cannot resist. But if the case be thus, you leave no room either for reward or punishment. Shall the stone be rewarded for rising from the sling, or punished for falling down? Shall the cannon-ball be rewarded for flying towards the sun, or punished for receding from it? As incapable of either punishment or reward is the man who is supposed to be impelled by a force he cannot resist. Justice can have no place in rewarding or punishing mere machines, driven to and fro by an external force. So that your supposition of God's ordaining from eternity whatsoever should be done to the end of the world; as well as that of God's acting irresistibly in the elect, and Satan's acting irresistibly in the reprobates; utterly overthrows the Scripture doctrine of rewards and punishments, as well as of a judgment to come.

38. Thus ill does that election which implies reprobation agree with the Scripture account of God's justice. And does it agree any better with his truth? How will you reconcile it with those plain passages? — "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways and live? Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed: For why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord: Wherefore, turn yourselves, and live ye." (Ezekiel 18:23, etc.)

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: For why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11.)

39. But perhaps you will say, "These ought to be limited and explained by other passages of Scripture; wherein this doctrine is as clearly affirmed, as it is denied in these." I must answer very plain: If this were true, we must give up all the Scriptures together; nor would the Infidels allow the Bible so honorable a title as that of a "cunningly-devised fable." But it is not true. It has no color of truth. It is absolutely, notoriously false. To tear up the very roots of reprobation, and of all doctrines that have a necessary

connection therewith, God declares in his word these three things, and that explicitly, in so many terms:

- (1.) “Christ died for all,” (2 Corinthians 5:14,) namely, all that were dead in sin, as the words immediately following, fix the sense: Here is the fact affirmed.
- (2.) “He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world,” (1 John 2:2,) even of all those for whom he died: Here is the consequence of his dying for all. And,
- (3.) “He died for all, that they should not live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them,” (2 Corinthians 5:15,) that they might be saved from their sins: Here is the design, the end of his dying for them.

Now, show me the scriptures wherein God declares in equally express terms,

- (1.) “Christ” did not die “for all,” but for some only.
- (2.) Christ is not “the propitiation for the sins of the whole world;” and,
- (3.) “He” did not die “for all,” at least, not with that intent, “that they should live unto him who died for them.” Show me, I say, the scriptures that affirm these three things in equally express terms. You know there are none. Nor is it possible to evade the force of those above recited, but by supplying in number what is wanting in weight; by heaping abundance of texts together, whereby (though none of them speak home to the point) the patrons of that opinion dazzle the eyes of the unwary, and quite overlay the understanding both of themselves and those that hear them.

40. To proceed: What an account does this doctrine give of the sincerity of God in a thousand declarations, such as these? — “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29.) “My people would not hear my voice, and Israel would not obey me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lusts, and let them follow their own imaginations. O that my people would have hearkened unto me! For if Israel had walked in my ways, I should soon have put down their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.” (Psalm 81:11, etc.) And all this time, you suppose God had

unchangeably ordained, that there never should be “such an heart in them!” that it never should be possible for the people whom he thus seemed to lament over, to hearken unto him, or to walk in his ways!

How clear and strong is the reasoning of Dr. Watts on this head! “It is very hard indeed, to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men, and their sending Ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be not at least a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them.

“His Ministers indeed, as they know not the event of things, may be sincere in offering salvation to all persons, according to their general commission, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ But how can God or Christ be sincere in sending them with this commission, to offer his grace to all men, if God has not provided such grace for all men, no, not so much as conditionally?

“It is hard to suppose, that the great God, who is truth itself, and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men to trust in a Savior for eternal life, when this Savior has not eternal life intrusted with him to give them if they do as he requires. It is hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting sinners, who are on the brink of hell, to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere shadow and appearance of support, if there be nothing real to bear them up from those deeds of destruction, nothing but mere words and empty invitations! Can we think, that the righteous and holy God would encourage his Ministers to call them to leave and rest the weight of their immortal concerns upon a gospel, a covenant of grace, a Mediator, and his merit and righteousness? all which are a mere nothing with regard to them, a heap of empty names, an unsupporting void which cannot uphold them?”

41. Our blessed Lord does indisputably command and invite “all men everywhere to repent.” He calleth all. He sends his ambassadors, in his name, to “preach the gospel to every creature.” He himself “preached deliverance to the captives,” without any hint of restriction or limitation. But now, in what manner do you represent him, while he is employed in

this work? You suppose him to be standing at the prison-doors, having the keys thereof in his hands, and to be continually inviting the prisoners to come forth, commanding them to accept of that invitation, urging every motive which can possibly induce them to, comply with that command; adding the most precious promises, if they obey, the most dreadful threatenings, if they obey not; and all this time you suppose him to be unalterably determined in himself never to open the doors for them! even while he is crying, “Come ye, come ye, from that evil place: For why will ye die, O house of Israel!” “Why!” might one of them reply, “because we cannot help it. We cannot help ourselves; and thou wilt not help us. It is not in our power to break the gates of brass, and it is not thy pleasure to open them. *Why will we die!* We must die; because it is not thy will to save us.” Alas! my brethren, what kind of sincerity is this, which you ascribe to God our Savior?

42. So ill do election and reprobation agree with the truth and sincerity of God! But do they not agree least of all with the scriptural account of his love and goodness? that attribute which God peculiarly claims, wherein he glories above all the rest. It is not written, “God is justice,” or “God is truth:” (Although he is just and true in all his ways:) But it is written, “God is love,” love in the abstract, without bounds; and “there is no end of his goodness.” His love extends even to those who neither love nor fear him. He is good, even to the evil and the unthankful; yea, without any exposition or limitation, to all the children of men. For “the Lord is loving” (or good) “to every man, and his mercy is over all his works.”

But how is God good or loving to a reprobate, or one that is not elected? (You may choose either term: For if none but the unconditionally elect are saved, it comes precisely to the same thing.) You cannot say, he is an object of the love or goodness of God, with regard to his eternal state, whom he created, says Mr. Calvin plainly and fairly, *in vitae contumeliam et mortis exitium*, “to live a reproach, and die everlastingly.” Surely, no one can dream, that the goodness of God is at all concerned with this man’s eternal state. “However, God is good to him in this world.” What! when by reason of God’s unchangeable decree, it had been good for this man never to have been born? when his very birth was a curse, not a blessing? “Well, but he now enjoys many of the gifts of God, both gifts of nature

and of providence. He has food and raiment, and comforts of various kinds. And are not all these great blessings?" No, not to him. At the price he is to pay for them, every one of these also is a curse. Every one of these comforts is, by an eternal decree, to cost him a thousand pangs in hell. For every moment's pleasure which he now enjoys, he is to suffer the torments of more than a thousand years for the smoke of that pit which is preparing for him ascendeth up for ever and ever. God knew this would be the fruit of whatever he should enjoy, before the vapor of life fled away. He designed it should. It was his very purpose, in giving him those enjoyments. So that, by all these, (according to your account,) he is, in truth and reality, only fattening the ox for the slaughter. "Nay, but God gives him grace too." Yes; but what kind of grace? Saving grace, you own, he has none; none of a saving nature. And the common grace he has was not given with any design to save his soul; nor with any design to do him any good at all; but only to restrain him from hurting the elect. So far from doing him good, that this grace also necessarily increases his damnation. "And God knows this," you say, "and designed it should; it was one great end for which he gave it!" Then I desire to know, how is God good or loving to this man, either with regard to time or eternity?

43. Let us suppose a particular instance: Here stands a man who is reprobated from all eternity; or, if you would express it more smoothly, one who is not elected, whom God eternally decreed to pass by. Thou hast nothing therefore to expect from God after death, but to be cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone; God having consigned thy unborn soul to hell, by a decree which cannot pass away. And from the time thou wast born under the irrevocable curse of God, thou canst have no peace. For there is no peace to the wicked; and such thou art doomed to continue, even from thy mother's womb. Accordingly, God giveth thee of this world's goods, on purpose to enhance thy damnation. He giveth thee now substance or friends in order hereafter to heap the more coals of fire upon thy head. He filleth thee with food, he maketh thee fat and well liking, to make thee a more specious sacrifice to his vengeance. Good nature, generosity, a good understanding, various knowledge, it may be, or eloquence, are the flowers wherewith he adorneth thee, thou poor victim, before thou art; brought to the slaughter. Thou hast grace too! but what grace? Not saving grace. That is not for thee, but for the elect only. Thine

may properly be termed, damning grace; since it is not only such in the event, but in the intention. Thou receivedst it of God for that very end, that thou mightest receive the greater damnation. It was given, not to convert thee, but only to convince; not to make thee without sin, but without excuse; not to destroy but to arm the worm that never dieth, and to blow up the fire that never shall be quenched.

44. Now, I beseech you to consider calmly, how is God good or loving to this man? Is not this such love as makes your blood run cold? as causes the ears of him that heareth to tingle? And can you believe there is that man on earth or in hell, who can truly tell God, “Thus hast thou done?” Can you think, that the loving, the merciful God, ever dealt thus with any soul which he hath made? But you must and do believe this, if you believe unconditional election. For it holds reprobation in its bosom; they never were, never can be, divided. Take then your choice. If, for the sake of election, you will swallow reprobation, well. But if you cannot digest this, you must necessarily give up unconditional election.

45. “But you cannot do this; for then you should be called a Pelagian, an Arminian, and what not.” And are you afraid of hard names? Then you have not begun to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. No, that is not the case. But you are afraid, if you do not hold election, you must hold free-will, and so rob God of his glory in man’s salvation.”

I answer,

(1.) Many of the greatest maintainers of election utterly deny the consequence, and do not allow, that even natural free-will in man is repugnant to God’s glory. These accordingly assert, that every man living has a measure of natural free-will. So the Assembly of Divines, (and therein the body of Calvinists both in England and Scotland,) “God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty that is neither forced, nor, by an absolute necessity of nature, determined to do good or evil:” (Chap. 9:) And this they assert of man in his fallen state even before he receives the grace of God.

- (2) But I do not carry free-will so far: (I mean, not in moral things:) Natural free-will, in the present state of mankind, I do not understand: I only assert, that there is a measure of free will supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which “enlightens every man that cometh into the world.” But indeed, whether this be natural or no, as to your objection it matters not. For that equally lies against both, against any free-will of any kind; your assertion being thus, “If man has any free-will, God cannot have the whole glory of his salvation;” or, “It is not so much for the glory of God, to save man as a free agent, put into a capacity of concurring with his grace on the one hand, and of resisting it on the other; as to save him in the way of a necessary agent, by a power which he cannot possibly resist.”

46. With regard to the former of these assertions, “If man has any free-will, then God cannot have the whole glory of his salvation,” is your meaning this: “If man has any power to ‘work out his own salvation,’ then God cannot have the whole glory?” If it be, I must ask again, What do you mean by God’s “having the whole glory?” Do you mean, “His doing the whole work, without any concurrence on man’s part?” If so, your assertion is, “If man do at all ‘work together with God,’ in ‘working out his own salvation,’ then God does not do the whole work, without man’s ‘working together with Him.’” Most true, most sure: But cannot you see, how God nevertheless may have all the glory? Why, the very power to “work together with Him” was from God. Therefore to Him is all the glory. Has not even experience taught you this? Have you not often felt, in a particular temptation, power either to resist or yield to the grace of God? And when you have yielded to “work together with Him,” did you not find it very possible, notwithstanding, to give him all the glory? So that both experience and Scripture are against you here, and make it clear to every impartial inquirer, that though man has freedom to work or not “work together with God,” yet may God have the whole glory of his salvation.

47. If then you say, “We ascribe to God alone the whole glory of our salvation;” I answer, So do we too. If you add, “Nay, but we affirm, that God alone does the whole work, without man’s working at all;” in one

sense, we allow this also. We allow, it is the work of God alone to justify, to sanctify, and to glorify; which three comprehend the whole of salvation. Yet we cannot allow, that man can only resist, and not in any wise “work together with God;” or that God is so the whole worker of our salvation, as to exclude man’s working at all. This I dare not say; for I cannot prove it by Scripture; nay, it is flatly contrary thereto; for the Scripture is express, that (having received power from God) we are to “work out our own salvation;” and that (after the work of God is begun in our souls) we are “workers together with Him.”

48. Your objection, proposed in another form, is this: “It is not so much for the glory of God, to save man as a free agent, I put into a capacity of either concurring with, or resisting, his grace; as to save him in the way of a necessary agent, by a power which he cannot possibly resist.”

O that the Lord would answer for himself! that he would arise and maintain his own cause! that he would no longer suffer his servants, few as they are, to weaken one another’s hands, and to be wearied not only with the “contradiction of sinners,” but even of those who are in a measure saved from sin! “Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech! among them that are enemies to peace! I labor for peace; but when I speak thereof, they still make themselves ready for battle.”

49. If it must be, then, let us look one another in the face. How is it more for the glory of God to save man irresistibly, than to save him as a free agent, by such grace as he may either concur with or resist? I fear you have a confused, unscriptural notion of “the glory of God.” What do you mean by that expression? The glory of God, strictly speaking, is his glorious essence and his attributes, which have been ever of old. And this glory admits of no increase, being the same yesterday, today, and forever. But the Scripture frequently speaks of the glory of God, in a sense something different from this; meaning thereby, the manifestation of his essential glory, of his eternal power and godhead, and of his glorious attributes, more especially his justice, mercy, and truth. And it is in this sense alone that the glory of God is said to be advanced by man. Now then, this is the point which it lies on you to prove: “That it does more eminently manifest the glorious attributes of God, more especially his justice, mercy,

and truth, to save man irresistibly, than to save him by such grace as it is in his power either to concur with, or to resist.”

50. But you must not imagine I will be so unwise as to engage you here on this single point. I shall not now dispute (which yet might be done,) whether salvation by irresistible grace, (which indeed makes man a mere machine, and, consequently, no more rewardable and punishable,) whether, I say, salvation by irresistible grace, considered apart from its consequences, manifest the glory of God more or less than salvation by grace which may be resisted. Not so; but, by the assistance of God, I shall take your whole scheme together; irresistible grace for the elect, implying the denial of saving grace to all others; or unconditional election with its inseparable companion, unconditional reprobation.

The case is clearly this: You may drive me, on the one hand, unless I will contradict myself, or retract my principles, to own a measure of free-will in every man; (though not by nature, as the Assembly of Divines;) and, on the other hand, I can drive you, and every assertor of unconditional election, unless you will contradict yourself, or retract your principles, to own unconditional reprobation.

Stand forth, then, free-will on the one side, and reprobation on the other; and let us see whether the one scheme, attended with the absurdity, as you think it, of free-will, or the other scheme, attended with the absurdity of reprobation, be the more defensible. Let us see (if it please the Father of Lights to open the eyes of our understanding) which of these is more for the glory of God, for the display of his glorious attributes, for the manifestation of his wisdom, justice, and mercy, to the sons of men.

51. First, his wisdom. If man be in some measure free; if, by that light which “lighteneth every man that comes into the world,” there be “set before him life and death, good and evil;” then how gloriously does the manifold wisdom of God appear in the whole economy of man’s salvation! Being willing that all men should be saved, yet not willing to force them thereto; willing that men should be saved, yet not as trees or stones, but as men, as reasonable creatures, endued with understanding to discern what is good, and liberty either to accept or refuse it; how does he

suit the whole scheme of his dispensations to this his *προθεσις*, his plan, “the counsel of his will!” His first step is to enlighten the understanding by that general knowledge of good and evil. To this he adds many secret reproofs, if they act contrary to this light; many inward convictions, which there is not a man on earth who has not often felt. At other times he gently moves their wills, he draws and woos them, as it were, to walk in the light. He instills into their hearts good desires, though perhaps they know not from whence they come. Thus far he proceeds with all the children of men, yea, even with those who have not the knowledge of his written word. But in this, what a field of wisdom is displayed, suppose man to be in some degree a free agent! How is every part of it suited to this end! to save man, as man; to set life and death before him, and then persuade (not force) him to choose life. According to this grand purpose of God, a perfect rule is first set before him, to serve as a “lantern to his feet, and a light in all his paths.” This is offered to him in a form of a law, enforced with the strongest sanctions, the most glorious rewards for them that obey, the severest penalties on them that break it. To reclaim these, God uses all manner of ways; he tries every avenue of their souls. He applies sometimes to their understanding, showing them the folly of their sins; sometimes to their affections, tenderly expostulating with them for their ingratitude, and even condescending to ask, “What could I have done for” you (consistent with my eternal purpose, not to force you) “which I have not done?” He intermixes sometimes threats, — “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;” sometimes promises, — “Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.” Now, what wisdom is seen in all this, if man may indeed choose life or death! But if every man be unalterably consigned to heaven or hell before he comes from his mother’s womb, where is the wisdom of this; of dealing with him, in every respect, as if he were free, when it is no such thing? What avails, what can this whole dispensation of God avail a reprobate? What are promises or threats, expostulations or reproofs to thee, thou firebrand of hell? What, indeed, (O my brethren, suffer me to speak, for I am full of matter!) but empty farce, but mere grimace, sounding words, that mean just nothing? O where (to wave all other considerations now) is the wisdom of this proceeding! To what end does all this apparatus serve? If you say, “To insure his damnation;” alas, what needeth that, seeing this was insured before the foundation of the world! Let all mankind then judge, which of these

accounts is more for the glory of God's wisdom!

52. We come next to his justice. Now, if man be capable of choosing good or evil, then he is a proper object of the justice of God, acquitting or condemning, rewarding or punishing. But otherwise he is not. A mere machine is not capable of being either acquitted or condemned. Justice cannot punish a stone for falling to the ground; nor, on your scheme, a man for falling into sin. For he can no more help it than the stone, if he be, in your sense, fore-ordained to this condemnation. Why does this man sin? "He cannot cease from sin." Why cannot he cease from sin? "Because he has no saving grace." Why has he no saving grace? "Because God, of his own good pleasure, hath eternally decreed not to give it him." Is he then under an unavoidable necessity of sinning? "Yes, as much as a stone is of falling. He never had any more power to cease from evil, than a stone has to hang in the air." And shall this man, for not doing what he never could do, and for doing what he never could avoid, be sentenced to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? "Yes, because it is the sovereign will of God." Then "you have either found a new God, or made one!" This is not the God of the Christians. Our God is just in all his ways; he reapeth not where he hath not strewed. He requireth only according to what he hath given; and where he hath given little, little is required. The glory of his justice is this, to "reward every man according to his works." Hereby is that glorious attribute shown, evidently set forth before men and angels, in that it is accepted of every man according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not. This is that just decree which cannot pass, either in time or in eternity.

Thus one scheme gives the justice of God its full scope, leaves room for it to be largely displayed in all its branches; whereas the other makes it a mere shadow; yea, brings it absolutely to nothing.

53. Just as gloriously does it display his love; supposing it to be fixed on one in ten of his creatures, (might I not rather say, on one in a hundred?) and to have no regard to the rest. Let the ninety-and-nine reprobates perish without mercy. It is enough for him, to love and save the one elect. But why will he have mercy on these alone, and leave all those to inevitable destruction? "He will — because he will!" O that God would

give unto you who thus speak, meekness of wisdom! Then, would I ask, What would the universal voice of mankind pronounce of the man that should act thus? that being able to deliver millions of men from death with a single breath of his mouth, should refuse to save any more than one in a hundred, and say, "I will not, because I will not!" How then do you exalt the mercy of God, when you ascribe such a proceeding to him? What a strange comment is this on his own word, that "his mercy is over all his works!"

Do you think to evade this by saying, "His mercy is more displayed, in irresistibly saving the elect, than it would be in giving the choice of salvation to all men, and actual salvation to those that accepted it?" How so? Make this appear if you can. What proof do you bring of this assertion? I appeal to every impartial mind, whether the reverse be not obviously true; whether the mercy of God would not be far less gloriously displayed, in saving a few by his irresistible power, and leaving all the rest without help, without hope, to perish everlastingly, than in offering salvation to every creature, actually saving all that consent thereto, and doing for the rest all that infinite wisdom, almighty power, and boundless love can do, without forcing them to be saved, which would be to destroy the very nature that he had given them. I appeal, I say, to every impartial mind, and to your own, if not quite blinded with prejudice, which of these accounts places the mercy of God in the most advantageous light.

54. Perhaps you will say, "But there are other attributes of God, namely, his sovereignty, unchangeableness, and faithfulness. I hope you do not deny these." I answer, No; by no means. The sovereignty of God appears,

- (1.) In fixing from eternity that decree touching the sons of men, "He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not shall be damned."
- (2.) In all the general circumstances of creation; in the time, the place, the manner of creating all things; in appointing the number and kinds of creatures, visible and invisible.
- (3.) In allotting the natural endowments of men, these to one, and those to another.
- (4.) In disposing the time, place, and other outward circumstances (as parents, relations) attending the birth of every one.

(5.) In dispensing the various gifts of his Spirit, for the edification of his Church.

(6.) In ordering all temporal things, as health, fortune, friends, everything short of eternity.

But in disposing the eternal states of men, (allowing only what was observed under the first article,) it is clear, that not sovereignty alone, but justice, mercy, and truth hold the reins. The Governor of heaven and earth, the I AM, over all, God blessed forever, takes no step here but as these direct, and prepare the way before his face. This is his eternal and irresistible will, as he hath revealed unto us by his Spirit; declaring in the strongest terms, adding his oath to his word, and, because he would swear by no greater, swearing by himself, “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.” The death of him that dieth can never be resolved into my pleasure or sovereign will. No; it is impossible. We challenge all mankind, to bring on clear, scriptural proof to the contrary. You can bring no scripture proof that God ever did, or assertion that he ever will, act as mere sovereign in eternally condemning any soul that ever was or will be born into the world.

55. Now, you are probably thinking of Esau and Pharaoh. Do you then set it down as an unquestionable truth, that these were eternally condemned by the mere sovereign will of God? Are you sure that they were eternally condemned? Even that point is not altogether certain. It is nowhere asserted in holy writ; and it would cost you some pains to prove it. It is true, Pharaoh’s death was a punishment from God; but it does not follow, that he was punished everlastingly. And if he was, it was not by the mere sovereign will of God, but because of his own stubbornness and impenitence.

Of this Moses has given us a particular account: Accordingly we read, “When Pharaoh saw that there was respite,” (after he was delivered from the plague of frogs,) “he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them.” (Exodus 8:15.) So after the plague of flies, “Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.” (Verse 32.) Again: “When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.” (9:34.) After God had given him all this space to repent, and had expostulated with him for his

obstinate impenitence, in those solemn words, “How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?” (10:3;) what wonder is it, if God then “hardened his heart,” that is, permitted Satan to harden it? if he at length wholly withdrew his softening grace, and “gave him up to a reprobate mind?”

56. The case of Esau is widely different from this; although his conduct also is blamable in many points. The first was, the selling his birth-right to Jacob. (Genesis 25:31, etc.) The next, his marrying against his father’s consent. (26:34, 35.) But it is highly probable he was sensible of his fault; because Isaac appears to have been fully reconciled to him when he said, “My son, make me savory meat, that my soul may bless thee before I die.” (27:4.)

In the following verses we have an account of the manner wherein he was supplanted by his brother Jacob. Upon Isaac’s relation of this, “Esau cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father!” (Verse 34.) But “he found no place,” says the Apostle, “for repentance,” for recovering the blessing, “though he sought it carefully with tears.” “Thy brother,” said Isaac, “hath taken away thy blessing: I have blessed him, yell, and he shall be blessed.” So that all Esau’s sorrow and tears could not recover his birth-right, and the blessing annexed thereto.

And yet there is great reason to hope, that Esau (as well as Jacob) is now in Abraham’s bosom. For although for a time “he hated Jacob,” and afterward came against him “with four hundred men,” very probably designing to take revenge for the injuries he had sustained; yet we and, when they met, “Esau ran and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him.” So thoroughly had God changed his heart! And why should we doubt but that happy change continued?

57. You can ground no solid objection to this on St. Paul’s words in the Epistle to the Romans: “It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” (9:12, 13.) For it is undeniably plain, that both these scriptures relate, not to the persons of Jacob and Esau, but to their descendants; the Israelites

sprung from Jacob, and the Edomites sprung from Esau. In this sense only did “the elder” (Esau) “serve the younger;” not in his person, (for Esau never served Jacob,) but in his posterity. The posterity of the elder brother served the posterity of the younger.

The other text referred to by the Apostle runs thus: “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.” (Malachi 1:2, 3.) Whose heritage was it that God laid waste? Not that which Esau personally enjoyed; but that of his posterity, the Edomites, for their enormous sins, largely described by several of the Prophets. So neither here is there any instance of any man being finally condemned by the mere sovereign will of God.

58. The unchangeableness of God, we allow likewise. “In him is no variable less, neither shadow of turning.” But you seem to lie under a mistake concerning this also, for want of observing the scripture account of it. The Scripture teaches,

(1) That God is unchangeable with regard to his decrees. But what decrees? The same that he has commanded to be preached to every creature: “He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” The Scripture teaches,

(2.) That God is unchangeable with regard to his love and hatred. But how? Observe this well; for it is your grand mistake, and the root of almost all the rest. God unchangeably loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. Unchangeably he loveth faith, and unchangeably hateth unbelief. In consequence hereof he unchangeably loves the righteous, and hateth the workers of iniquity. He unchangeably loves them that believe, and hates willful, obstinate unbelievers.

So that the scripture account of God’s unchangeableness with regard to his decrees, is this: He has unchangeably decreed to save holy believers, and to condemn obstinate, impenitent unbelievers. And according to Scripture, his unchangeableness of affection properly and primarily regards tempers and not persons; and persons (as Enoch, Noah, Abraham) only as those tempers are found in them. Let then the unchangeableness of God be put upon the right foot; let the Scripture be allowed to fix the objects of it, and it will as soon prove transubstantiation, as unconditional election.

59. The faithfulness of God may be termed a branch of his truth. He will perform what he hath promised. But then let us inquire of the oracles of God, To whom are the promises made? the promises of life and immortality? The answer is, "To Abraham and his seed;" that is, to those who "walk in the steps of that faith of their father Abraham." To those who believe, as believers, are the gospel promises made. To these hath the faithful God engaged, that he will do what he hath spoken. "He will fulfill his covenant and promise which he hath made to a thousand generations:" The sum of which is, (as we find it expressly declared by the Spirit of God,) "The Lord will give grace" (more grace) "and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them that live a godly life."

60. This covenant of God I understand; but I have heard of another which I understand not. I have heard, "that God the Father made a covenant with his Son, before the world began, wherein the Son agreed to suffer such and such things, and the Father to give him such and such souls for a recompence; that in consequence of this, those souls must be saved, all those only, so that all others must be damned." I beseech you, where is this written? In what part of Scripture is this covenant to be found? We may well expect a thing of this moment to be revealed very expressly, with the utmost clearness and solemnity. But where is this done? And if it is not done, if there is no such account in all the Bible; which shall we wonder at most, that any serious man should advance, or that thousands should believe, so strange an assertion, without one plain text of Scripture to support it, from Genesis to the Revelation?

61. I suppose you do not imagine that the bare word covenant, if it occurred ever so often in holy writ, is a proof of any such covenant as this. The grand covenant which we allow to be mentioned therein, is a covenant between God and man, established in the hands of a Mediator, "who tasted death for every man," and thereby purchased it for all the children of men. The tenor of it (so often mentioned already) is this: "Whosoever believeth unto the end, so as to show his faith by his works, I the Lord will reward that soul eternally. But whosoever will not believe, and consequently dieth in his sins, I will punish him with everlasting destruction."

62. To examine thoroughly whether this covenant between God and man be unconditional or conditional, it may be needful to go back as far as Abraham, the father of the faithful; to inquire what manner of covenant it was which God made with him; and whether any reason be assigned of God's peculiarly blessing Abraham, and all the nations of the earth in him.

The first mention of the covenant between God and him, occurs Genesis 15:18: "The same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land." But this is much more explicitly related in chapter 17:1, etc.: "The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: And God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised; — it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off; he hath broken my covenant." So we see, this original covenant, though everlasting, was conditional, and man's failing in the condition cleared God.

63. We have St. Paul's account of this covenant of God with Abraham, in the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, verse 3, etc.: "Abraham," saith he, "believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." (This was a little before God established his covenant with him, and is related Genesis 15:6.) "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might as the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision" (that is, of them that are circumcised) "to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised." Now, if these words do not express a conditional covenant, certainly none can.

64. The nature and ground of this covenant of God with Abraham is farther explained: “And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him: And they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring unto Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” (Genesis 18:17, etc.)

Does God say here, “I *will* do it, because I *will*” Nothing less. The reason is explicitly assigned: “All nations shall be blessed in him; for he will command his children, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.”

The reason is yet more (clearly it cannot, but more) fully set down in the twenty-second chapter, verse 16, etc.: “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, *because* thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing “will bless thee; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;” that is, the Messiah shall spring from thee, “*because* thou hast obeyed my voice.”

This is yet again declared: “And the Lord appeared unto Isaac, and said, — Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and bless thee: For unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father. In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed: *Because* that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” (Genesis 26:2, etc.)

65. This covenant, made to Abraham and his seed, is mentioned again: “And the Lord called unto Moses, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.” (Exodus 19:3, etc.)

In the following chapter, God declares the terms of the covenant they were to keep, in ten commandments. And these themselves are sometimes termed “the covenant,” sometimes “the book of the covenant.” So, after

God had made an end of speaking to the people, it is said, “And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, — and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses took the blood,” (of the burnt-offering,) “and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.” (24:4, etc.)

After the people had broken this covenant by worshipping the golden calf, God renews it, Exodus 34, where we read, “And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: For after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel — and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.” (Verses 27, 28.)

66. According to the tenor of this covenant, made to Abraham and his seed, God afterward declares, “If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will establish my covenant with you, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. But if ye will not hearken, unto me, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant; I will set my face against you, and I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant. Yet if they shall confess their iniquity, and if their uncircumcised hearts be humbled; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember.” (Leviticus 26:3, etc.) Consequently the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was conditional, as well as that with their posterity.

67. “But is not the faithfulness of God engaged to keep all that now believe from falling away?” I cannot say that. Whatever assurance God may give to particular souls, I find no general promise in holy writ, “that none who once believes shall finally fall.” Yet, to say the truth, this is so pleasing an opinion, so agreeable to flesh and blood, so suitable to whatever of nature remains in those who have tasted the grace of God, that I see nothing but the mighty power of God which can restrain any who hears it from closing with it. But still it wants one thing to recommend it, — plain, cogent scripture proof.

Arguments from experience alone will never determine this point. They can only prove thus much, on the one hand, that our Lord is exceeding patient; that he is peculiarly unwilling any believer should perish; that he bears long, very long, with all their follies, waiting to be gracious, and to heal their backsliding; and that he does actually bring back many lost sheep, who, to man's apprehensions, were irrecoverable: But all this does not amount to a convincing proof, that no believer can or does fall from grace. So that this argument, from experience, will weigh little with those who believe the possibility of falling.

And it will weigh full as little with those who do not; for if you produce ever so many examples of those who were once strong in faith, and are now more abandoned than ever, they will evade it by saying, "O, but they will be brought back; they will not die in their sins." And if they do die in their sins, we come no nearer; we have not gained one point still: For it is easy to say, "They were only hypocrites; they never had true faith." Therefore Scripture alone can determine this question; and Scripture does so fully determine it, that there needs only to set down a very few texts, with some short reflections upon them.

68. That one who is a true believer, or, in other words, one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless finally fall from grace, appears,

- (1.) From the word of God by Ezekiel: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity: In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." (18:24.)

Do you object, "This chapter relates wholly and solely to the Jewish Church and nation?"³² I answer, Prove this. Till then, I shall believe that many parts of it concern all mankind.

If you say,

- (2.) "The righteousness spoken of in this chapter was merely an outward righteousness, without an inward principle of grace or holiness." I ask, How is this consistent with the thirty-first verse: "Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have

transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit?" Is this a "merely outward righteousness, without any inward principle of grace or holiness?"

69. Will you add, "But admitting the person here spoken of to be a truly righteous man, what is here said is only a supposition?" That I flatly deny. Read over the chapter again; and you will see the facts there laid down to be not barely supposed, but expressly asserted.

That the death here mentioned is eternal death, appears from the twenty-sixth verse: "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them," — here is temporal death; "for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die." Here is death eternal.

If you assert, "Both these expressions signify the same thing, and not two different deaths," you put a palpable force upon the text, in order to make the Holy Ghost speak nonsense.

"Dying *in* his iniquity," you say, "is the same thing as 'dying *for* his iniquity.'" Then the text means thus: "When he dieth in them, he shall die in them." A very deep discovery!

But you say, "It cannot be understood of eternal death; because they might be delivered from it by repentance and reformation." And why might they not by such repentance as is mentioned in the thirty-first verse be delivered from eternal death?

"But the whole chapter," you think, "has nothing to do with the spiritual and eternal affairs of men."

I believe every impartial man will think quite the contrary, if he reads calmly either the beginning of it, — "All souls are mine, saith the Lord God; the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" where I can by no means allow that by the death of the soul is meant only a temporal affliction; or the conclusion, — "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your

transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit: For why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

It remains then, one who is righteous in the judgment of God himself, may finally fall from grace.

70. Secondly. That one who is ended with the faith which produces a good conscience, may nevertheless finally fall, appears from the words of St. Paul to Timothy: "War a good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." (1 Timothy 1:18, 19.)

Observe,

(1.) These men had once the faith that produces "a good conscience;" which they once had, or they could not have "put it away."

(2.) They made shipwreck of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it.

You object: "Nay, the putting away a good conscience does not suppose they had it, but rather that they had it not."

This is really surprising. But how do you prove it? "Why, by Acts 13:46, where St. Paul says to the Jews, 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: But seeing ye put it from you, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' Here you see the Jews, who never had the gospel, are said to put it away."

How! Are you sure they "never had what they are here said to put away?" Not so: What they put away, it is undeniable, they had, till they put it away; namely, "the word of God spoken" by Paul and Barnabas. This instance, therefore, makes full against you. It proves just the reverse of what you cited it for.

But you object further: "Men may have a good conscience, in some sense, without true faith."

I grant it, in a restrained, limited sense; but not a good conscience, simply and absolutely speaking. But such is that of which the Apostle here speaks, and which he exhorts Timothy to “hold fast.” Unless you apprehend that the holding it fast likewise “rather supposes he never had it.”

“But the faith here mentioned means only the doctrine of faith.” I want better proof of this.

It remains, then, one who has the faith which produces a good conscience may yet finally fall.

71. Thirdly. Those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless finally fall.

For thus saith the Apostle: “Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Be not high-minded, but fear: If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: Otherwise thou shalt be cut off.” (Romans 11:17, etc.)

We may observe here,

- (1.) The persons spoken to were actually ingrafted into the olive tree.
- (2.) This olive tree is not barely the outward, visible Church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text: “If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” And “because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.”
- (3.) Those holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible Church, into which they were then grafted.
- (4.) Here is not the least intimation of their being ever grafted in again.

To this you object,

(1.)“This olive tree is not the invisible Church, but only the outward gospel Church state.” You affirm this; and I prove the contrary; namely, that it is the invisible Church; for it “consists of holy believers,” which none but the invisible Church does.

(2.)“The Jews who were broken off were never true believers in Christ.”

I am not speaking of the Jews, but of those Gentiles who are mentioned in the twenty-second verse; whom St. Paul exhorts to “continue in his goodness;” otherwise, saith he, “thou shalt be cut off.” Now, I presume these were true believers in Christ. Yet they were still liable to be cut off.

You assert,

(3.)“This is only a cutting off from the outward Church state.” But how is this proved? So forced and unnatural a construction requires some argument to support it.

(4.)“There is a strong intimation that they shall be grafted in again.” No; not that those Gentiles who did not continue in his goodness should be grafted in after they were once cut off. I cannot find the least intimation of this. “But all Israel shall be saved.” I believe they will; but this does not imply the re-ingrafting of these Gentiles.

It remains, then, that those who are grafted into the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless finally fall.

72. Fourthly. Those who are branches of Christ, the true vine, may yet finally fall from grace.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” (John 15:1, etc.)

Here we may observe,

- (1.)The persons spoken of were in Christ, branches of the true vine.
- (2.)Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but “the Father taketh them away.”
- (3.)The branches which “abide not” are “cast forth,” cast out from Christ and his Church.
- (4.)They are not only “cast forth,” but “withered;” consequently, never grafted in again.
- (5.)They are not only “cast forth and withered,” but also “cast into the fire.” And,
- (6.)“They are burned.” It is not possible for words more strongly to declare that those who are branches of the true vine may finally fall.

“But this,” you say, “furnishes an argument for, not against, the persevering of the saints.”

Yes, just such an argument for final perseverance, as the above cited words of St. Paul to Timothy.

But how do you make it out? “Why thus: There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine; the one fruitful, the other unfruitful. The one are eternally chosen; and these abide in him, and can never withdraw away.” Nay, this is the very point to be proved. So that you now immediately and directly beg the question.

“The other sort of branches are such as are in Christ only by profession; who get into Churches, and so are reckoned in Christ; and these in time wither away. These never had any life, grace, or fruitfulness from him.”

Surely you do not offer this by way of argument! You are again taking for granted the very point to be proved.

But you will prove that “those are branches in Christ, who never had any life or grace from him, because the Churches of Judea and Thessalonica are said to be in Christ, though every individual member was not savingly in him.” I deny the consequence; which can never be made good, unless you can prove that those very Jews or Thessalonians who never had any life or grace from him are nevertheless said by our Lord to be “branches in him.”

It remains, that true believers, who are branches of the true vine, may nevertheless finally fall.

73. Fifthly. Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the Apostle Peter, “If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” (the only possible way of escaping them,) “they are entangled again therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.” (2 Peter 2:20.)

But you say,

- (1.) “Their knowledge was not an experimental knowledge.” And how do you prove this? “Because had it been such, they could not have lost it.” You are begging the question again.
- (2.) “Escaping the pollutions of the world signifies no more than an outward reformation.” How prove you that? You aim at no proof at all. But he that will grant it, may.
- (3.) “These persons never had any change wrought upon them. They were no other than dogs and swine, not only before and after, but even while they outwardly abstained from gross enormities.”

I grant, that before and after that time, during which they “escaped the pollutions of the world,” (or, as St. Peter words it in his former Epistle, “the corruption that is in the world,”) they might well be termed either “dogs” or “swine,” for their gross enormities. But that they deserved such an appellation during that time, I cannot grant without some proof.

It remains, that those who, by the inward knowledge of Christ, have escaped the pollutions of the world may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

74. Sixthly. Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the writer to the Hebrews: “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” (6:4-6.)

Must not every unprejudiced person see, the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

“But the Apostle makes only a supposition, *‘If they shall fall away.’*”

The Apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, **Αδυνατον τους απαξ φωτισθεντας — και παραπεσοντας**; that is, in plain English, “It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened and have fallen away.”

“No. The words in the original lie literally thus: ‘It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and they falling away, to renew them again unto repentance;’ that is, should they fall away, which is, in plain English, *if they fall away.*”

Excuse me for speaking plain English here. “Shall a man lie for God?” Either you or I do; for I flatly aver, (and let all that understand Greek judge between us,) that the words in the original do not lie literally thus, “and they falling away;” (if so, they must be *καὶ παραπιπτοντας*, in the present tense; not *καὶ παραπεσοντας*, in the indefinite;) but that they are translated, “and have fallen away,” as literally as the English tongue will bear.

Therefore here is no *if* in the case, no supposition at all, but a plain declaration of matter of fact.

75. “But why do you imagine these persons were true believers?” Because all the expressions, in their easy, natural sense, imply it.

They “were once enlightened;” an expression familiar with the Apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling; and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe.” (Ephesians 1:17, etc.) So again: “God, who commanded The light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6.)

“Nay, ‘they were enlightened’ means only, they were baptized, or knew the doctrines of the gospel.”

I cannot believe this, till you bring me a few passages from St. Paul’s writings, wherein that expression is evidently taken in either of these senses.

Again: They “had tasted of the heavenly gift,” (emphatically so called,) “and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.” So St. Peter likewise couples them together: “Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;” (Acts 2:38;) whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, with all the other fruits of the Spirit.

The expression, “They had tasted of the heavenly gift,” is taken from the Psalmist, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” As if he had said, Be ye as assured of his love, as of anything you see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.

“But this means only, they had some notions of remission of sins and heaven, and some desires after them; and they had received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost.” This you affirm; but without any color of proof.

It remains, that those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

76. Seventhly. Those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the Apostle: “The just shall live by faith: But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Hebrews 10:38.) “The just” (the justified person, of whom only this can be said) “shall live by faith;” even now shall live the life which is hid with Christ in God: and if he endure unto the end, shall live with God forever. “But if any man draw back,” saith the Lord, “my soul shall have no pleasure in him;” that; is, I will utterly cast him off: And accordingly the drawing back here spoken of, is termed in the verse immediately following, “drawing back to perdition.”

“But the person supposed to draw back, is not the same with him that is said to live by faith.”

I answer,

(1.) Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But,

(2.) Had the text been fairly translated, there had been no pretense for this objection. For the original runs thus: **Ο ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ ΖΗΣΕΤΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΑΝ ΥΠΟΣΕΙΛΗΤΑΙ.** If **ο δικαίος**, “the just man that lives by faith,”

(so the expression necessarily implies, there being no other nominative to the verb,) “draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

“But your translation too is inaccurate.” Be pleased to show me wherein.

“I grant he may draw back; and yet not draw back to perdition.” But then it is not the drawing back which is here spoken of.

“However, here is only a supposition, which proves no fact.” I observe, you take that as a general rule, Suppositions prove no facts. But this is not true. They do not always; but many times they do. And whether they do or no in a particular text, must be judged from the nature of the supposition, and from the preceding and following words.

“But the inserting *any man* into the text is agreeable to the grammatical construction of the words.” This I totally deny. There is no need of any such insertion. The preceding nominative suffices.

“But one that lives by faith cannot draw back. For ‘whom he justified, them he also glorified.’” This proves no more than, that all who are glorified are pardoned and sanctified first.

“Nay, but St. Paul says, ‘Ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.’” Most sure, if you endure to the end. “Whosoever believeth in him” to the end “shall never die.”

77. “But, to come more home to the point: I say, this text is so far from militating against perseverance, that it greatly establishes it.”

You are very unhappy in your choice of texts to establish this doctrine. Two of these establish it, just as this does, as we have seen already. Now, pray let us hear how you prove perseverance from this text.

“Very easily. Here are two sorts of persons mentioned; he that lives by faith, and he that draws back to perdition.”

Nay, this is the very question. I do not allow that two persons are mentioned in the text. I have shown it is one and the same person, who once lived by faith, and afterwards draws back.

Yet thus much I allow: Two sorts of believers are in the next verse mentioned; some that draw back, and some that persevere. And I allow, the Apostle adds, “We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.” But what will you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before, that it manifestly confirms it. It is a farther proof, that there are those who draw back unto perdition, although these were not of that number.

“I must still aver, that the text is rightly translated; which I prove thus: —

“The original text runs thus: ‘Behold, his soul who is lifted up is not upright in him: But the just shall live by his faith.’ (Habakkuk 2:4.)

“This the Seventy render, *Εαν υποσειληται, ουκ ευδοκει η ψυχη μου εν αυτω ο δε δικαιος εκ πισεως μου ζησεται*, ‘If a man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. But the just shall live by my faith;’ that is, faith in me.

“Now, here the man, in the former clause, who ‘draws back,’ is distinguished from him, in the following clause, who lives by faith.

“ But the Apostle quotes the text from this translation.”

True; but he does not “distinguish the man in the former clause who ‘draws back,’ from him, in the latter, who ‘lives by faith.’” So far from it, that he quite inverts the order of the sentence, placing the latter clause of it first. And by this means it comes to pass, that although, in translating this text from the Septuagint, we must insert “a man,” (because there is no nominative preceding,) yet in translating it from the Apostle, there is no need or pretense for inserting it, seeing *ο δικαιος* stands just before.

Therefore, such an insertion is a palpable violence to the text; which, consequently, is not rightly translated.

It remains, that those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

78. Eighthly. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the Apostle: “If we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?”

It is undeniably plain,

- (1.) That the person mentioned here was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant.
- (2.) That he afterward, by known, willful sin, trod under foot the Son of God. And,
- (3.) That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death; namely, death everlasting.

“Nay, the immediate antecedent to the relative ‘he,’ is ‘the Son of God.’ Therefore it was He, not the apostate, who was sanctified (set apart for his priestly office) by the blood of the covenant.”

Either you forgot to look at the original, or your memory fails. “The Son of God” is not the immediate antecedent to the relative “he.” The words run thus: “Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, **και το αιμα της διαθηκης κοινον ηγησαμενος, εν ω ηγιασθη**?” You see **ηγησαμενος**, not **υιος**, is the immediate antecedent to the relative “he.” Consequently, it is the apostate, not the Son of God, who is here said to be sanctified.

“If he was sanctified, yet this cannot be understood of inward sanctification. Therefore it must mean, either that he said he was sanctified, or that he made an outward profession of religion.”

Why cannot the word be understood in its proper, natural sense, of inward sanctification?

“Because that is by the Spirit of God.” From this very consideration it appears, that this must be understood of inward sanctification; for the words immediately following are, “and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace,” even that grace whereby he was once sanctified.

It remains, that those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may yet perish everlastingly.

79. If you imagine these texts are not sufficient to prove that a true believer may finally fall, I will offer a few more to your consideration, which I would beg you to weigh farther at your leisure: —

“Ye” (Christians) “are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.” (Matthew 5:13.) “When the unclean spirit goeth out of a man,” (as he does out of every true believer,) “he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return: And he taketh with him seven other spirits; and they enter in, and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.” (12:43-45.) “And then shall many be offended; and the love” (towards God and man) “of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.” (24:10, etc.) “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household? But if that evil servant” (wise and faithful as he was once) “shall begin to smite his fellow-servants; the Lord shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites,” (verse 45, etc.,) apostates, being no better than they.

“Take heed to yourselves,” ye that believe, “lest at any time your heart be overcharged with the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you

unawares.” (Luke 21:34:) Plainly implying, that otherwise they would not be “accounted worthy to stand before the Son of man.”

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31, 32.)

“I keep my body under; lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” (1 Corinthians 9:27.) “Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink: For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: And that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: For they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now, these things were for our examples: Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (10:3, etc.)

“We therefore, as workers together with him, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” (2 Corinthians 6:1.) But this were impossible, if none that ever had it could perish.

“Ye are fallen from grace.” (Galatians 5:4.) “We shall reap, if we faint not.” (6:9.) Therefore we shall not reap, if we do.

“We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” (Hebrews 3:14.)

“Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” (2 Peter 3:17.)

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not the things which we have wrought.” (2 John 8.)

“Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” (Revelations 3:11.) And, to conclude: —

“So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” (Matthew

18:35.) *So!* How? He will retract the pardon he had given, and deliver you to the tormentors.

80. “Why, then you make salvation conditional.” I make it neither conditional nor unconditional. But I declare just what I find in the Bible, neither more nor less; namely, that it is bought for every child of man, and actually given to every one that believeth. If you call this conditional salvation, God made it so from the beginning of the world; and he hath declared it so to be, at sundry times and in diverse manners; of old by Moses and the Prophets, and in later times by Christ and his Apostles.

“Then I never can be saved; for I can perform no conditions; for I can do nothing.” No, nor I, nor any man under heaven, — without the grace of God. “But I can do all things through Christ strengthening me.” So can you; so can every believer. And he has strengthened, and will strengthen, you more and more, if you do not willfully resist till you quench his Spirit.

81. “Nay, but God must work irresistibly in me, or I shall never be saved.” Hold! Consider that word. You are again advancing a doctrine which has not one plain, clear text to support it. I allow, God may possibly, at some times, work irresistibly in some souls. I believe he does. But can you infer from hence, that he always works thus in all that are saved? Alas! my brother, what kind of conclusion is this? And by what scripture will you prove it? Where, I pray, is it written, that none are saved but by irresistible grace? By almighty grace, I grant; by that power alone, to which all things are possible. But show me any one plain scripture for this, — that “all saving grace is irresistible.”

82. But this doctrine is not only unsupported by Scripture, it is flatly contrary thereto. How will you reconcile it (to instance in a very few) with the following texts? —

“He sent to call them, and they would not come.” (Matthew 23:3, etc.)
 “He could do no mighty works there, because of their unbelief.” (Mark 6:5, 6.) “There were Pharisees, and the power of the Lord was present to

heal them.” (Luke 5:17.) Nevertheless, they were not healed in fact, as the words immediately following show.

“The Pharisees and Lawyers made void the counsel of God against themselves.” (Luke 7:30.) “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not!” (13:34.) “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit. But there are some of you that believe not.” (John 6:63, etc.) Therefore, that Spirit did not work irresistibly. “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: As your fathers did, so do ye.” (Acts 7:51.) “Ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life.” (13:46.) “While it is called today, harden not your heart. Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:8, 12.) “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.” (12:25.)

83. I do but just give you a specimen of the innumerable scriptures which might be produced on this head. And why will you adhere to an opinion not only unsupported by, but utterly contrary both to, reason and Scripture? Be pleased to observe here also, that; you are not to consider the doctrine of irresistible grace by itself, any more than that of unconditional election, or final perseverance; but as it stands in connection with unconditional reprobation: That millstone which hangs about the neck of your whole hypothesis.

Will you say, “I adhere to it, because of its usefulness?” Wherein does that usefulness lie? “It exalts God and debases man.” In what sense does it exalt God? God in himself is exalted above all praise. Your meaning, therefore, I suppose, is this: It displays to others how highly he is exalted in justice, mercy, and truth. But the direct contrary of this has been shown at large; it has been shown, by various considerations, that God is not exalted, but rather dishonored, and that in the highest degree, by supposing him to despise the work of his own hands, the far greater part of the souls which he hath made. And as to the debasing man; if you mean, this opinion truly humbles the men that hold it, I fear it does not: I have not perceived, (and I have had large occasion to make the trial,) that all, or even the generality of them that hold it, are more humble than other men. Neither, I think, will you say, that none are humble who hold it not: So

that it is neither a necessary nor a certain means of humility. And if it be so sometimes, this only proves that God can bring good out of evil.

84. The truth is, neither this opinion nor that, but the love of God, humbles man, and that only. Let but this be shed abroad in his heart, and he abhors himself in dust and ashes. As soon as this enters into his soul, lowly shame covers his face. That thought, “What is God? What hath he done for me?” is immediately followed by, “What am I?” And he knoweth not what to do, or where to hide, or how to abase himself enough, before the great God of love, of whom he now knoweth, that as his majesty is, so is his mercy. Let him who has felt this (whatever be his opinion) say, whether he could then take glory to himself; whether he could ascribe to himself any part of his salvation, or the glory of any good word or thought. Lean, then, who will, on that broken reed for humility; but let the love of God humble my soul!

85. “Why, this is the very thing which recommends it. This doctrine makes men love God.” I answer as before. Accidentally it may; because God can draw good out of evil. But you will not say, all who hold it love God; so it is no certain means to that end. Nor will you say, that none love him who hold it not: Neither, therefore, is it a necessary means. But, indeed, when you talk at all of its “making men love God,” you know not what you do. You lead men into more danger than you are aware of. You almost unavoidably lead them into resting on that opinion; you cut them off from a true dependence on the fountain of living waters, and strengthen them in hewing to themselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water.

86. This is my grand objection to the doctrine of reprobation, or (which is the same) unconditional election. That it is an error, I know; because, if this were true, the whole Scripture must be false. But it is not only for this — because it is an error — that I so earnestly oppose it, but because it is an error of so pernicious consequence to the souls of men; because it directly and naturally tends to hinder the inward work of God in every stage of it.

87. For instance: Is a man careless and unconcerned, utterly dead in trespasses and sins? — Exhort him then (suppose he is of your own

opinion) to take some care of his immortal soul. "I take care!" says he: "What signifies my care? Why, what must be, must be. If I am elect, I must be saved; and if I am not, I must be damned." And the reasoning is as just and strong, as it is obvious and natural. It avails not to say, "Men may abuse any doctrine." So they may. But this is not abusing yours. It is the plain, natural use of it. The premises cannot be denied, (on your scheme,) and the consequence is equally clear and undeniable. Is he a little serious and thoughtful now and then, though generally cold and lukewarm? — Press him then to stir up the gift that is in him; to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. "Alas," says he, "what can I do! You know, man can do nothing." If you reply: "but you do not desire salvation; you are not willing to be saved:" "It may be so," says he, "but God shall make me willing in the day of his power." So, waiting for irresistible grace, he falls faster asleep than ever. See him again, when he thoroughly awakes out of sleep; when, in spite of his principles, fearfulness and trembling are come upon him, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed him. How then will you comfort him that is well-nigh swallowed up of over much sorrow? If at all, by applying the promises of God. But against these he is fenced on every side. "These indeed," says he, "are great and precious promises. But they belong to the elect only. Therefore they are nothing to me. I am not of that number. And I never can be; for his decree is unchangeable." Has he already tasted of the good word, and the powers of the world to come? Being justified by faith, hath he peace with God? Then sin hath no dominion over him. But by and by, considering he may fall foully indeed, but cannot fall finally, he is not so jealous over himself as he was at first; he grows a little and a little slacker, till ere long he falls again into the sin from which he was clean escaped. As soon as you perceive he is entangled again and overcome, you apply the scriptures relating to that state. You conjure him not to harden his heart any more, lest his last state be worse than the first. "How can that be?" says he: "Once in grace, always in grace; and I am sure I was in grace once. You shall never tear away my shield." So he sins on, and sleeps on, till he awakes in hell.

88. The observing these melancholy examples day by day, this dreadful havoc which the devil makes of souls, especially of those who had begun to run well, by means of this anti-scriptural doctrine, constrains me to

oppose it from the same principle whereon I labor to save souls from destruction. Nor is it sufficient to ask, Are there not also many who wrest the opposite doctrine to their own destruction? If there are, that is nothing to the point in question; for that is not the case here. Here is no wresting at all: The doctrine of absolute predestination naturally leads to the chambers of death.

Let an instance in each kind be proposed, and the difference is so broad, he that runneth may read it. I say, "Christ died for all. He tasted death for every man, and he willeth all men to be saved." "O," says an hearer, "then I can be saved when I will; so I may safely sin a little longer." No; this is no consequence from what I said; the words are wrested to infer what does not follow. You say, "Christ died only for the elect; and all these must and shall be saved." "O," says an hearer, "then if I am one of the elect, I must and shall be saved. Therefore I may safely sin a little longer; for my salvation cannot fail." Now, this is a fair consequence from what you said: The words are not wrested at all. No more is inferred than what plainly and undeniably follows from the premises. And the very same observation may be made on every article of that doctrine. Every branch of it, as well as this, (however the wisdom of God may sometimes draw good out of it,) has a natural, genuine tendency, without any wresting, either to prevent or obstruct holiness.

89. Brethren, would ye lie for the cause of God? I am persuaded ye would not. Think then that as ye are, so am I: I speak the truth, before God my Judge; not of those who were trained up therein, but of those who were lately brought over to your opinion. Many of these have I known; but I have not known one in ten of all that number, in whom it did not speedily work some of the above-named effects, according to the state of soul they were then in. And one only have I known among them all, after the closest and most impartial observation, who did not evidently show, within one year, that his heart was changed, not for the better, but for the worse.

90. I know indeed, ye cannot easily believe this. But whether ye believe it or no, you believe, as well as I, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. May we not then, at least, join in this, — in declaring the nature of inward holiness, and testifying to all the necessity of it? May we not all

thus far join in tearing away the broken reeds wherein so many rest, without either inward or outward holiness, and which they idly trust; will supply its place? As far as is possible, let us join in destroying the works of the devil, and in setting up the kingdom of God upon earth, in promoting righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Of whatever opinion or denomination we are, we must serve either God or the devil. If we serve God, our agreement is far greater than our difference. Therefore, as far as may be, setting aside that difference, let us unite in destroying the works of the devil, in bringing all we can from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And let us assist each other to value more and more the glorious grace whereby we stand, and daily to grow in that grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A PREDESTINARIAN AND HIS FRIEND.

Out of thine own mouth!

TO ALL PREDESTINARIANS.

1. I AM informed, some of you have said, that the following quotations are false; that these words were not spoken by these authors; others, that they were not spoken in this sense; and others, that neither you yourself, nor any true Predestinarian, ever did, or ever would, speak so.

2. My friends, the authors here quoted are well known, in whom you may read the words with your own eyes. And you who have read them know in your own conscience, they were spoken in this sense, and no other; nay, that this sense of them is professedly defended throughout the whole treatises whence they are taken.

3. But, be this as it may, do you indeed say, “No true Predestinarian ever did or would speak so?” Why, every true Predestinarian must speak so, and so must you yourself too, if you dare speak out, unless they and you renounce your fundamental principle.

4. Your fundamental principle is this: “God from eternity ordained whatsoever should come to pass.” But from this single position undeniably follows every assertion hereafter mentioned. It remains

therefore only that you choose which you please (for one you must choose) of these three things: Either,

- (1.) To equivocate, evade the question, and prevaricate without end; or,
- (2.) To swallow all these assertions together, and honestly to avow them; or,
- (3.) To renounce them all together, and believe in Christ, the Savior of all.

FRIEND. — SIR, I have heard that you make God the author of all sin, and the destroyer of the greater part of mankind without mercy.

PREDESTINARIAN. — I deny it; I only say, “God did from all eternity unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.” (*Assembly’s Catechism*, chap. 3.)

Friend. — Do you make no exception?

Pred. — No, surely; for “nothing is more absurd than to think anything at all is done but by the ordination of God.” (*Calvin’s Institutes*, book 1., chap. 16, sect. 3.)

Friend. — Do you extend this to the actions of men?

Pred. — Without doubt: “Every action and motion of every creature is so governed by the hidden counsel of God, that nothing can come to pass, but what was ordained by him.” (*Ibid.*, sect. 3.)

Friend. — But what then becomes of the wills of men?

Pred. — “The wills of men are so governed by the will of God, that they are carried on straight to the mark which he has fore-ordained.” (*Ibid.*, sect. 8.)

Friend. — I suppose you mean the permissive will of God?

Pred. — No: I mean, “all things come to pass by the efficacious and irresistible will of God.” (*Twissi Vindiciae Gratiae Potestatis & Providentiae Dei. Editio Jensoniana*, par. 3, p. 19.)

Friend. — Why, then, all men must do just what they do?

Pred. — True: “It is impossible that anything should ever be done, but that to which God impels the will of man.” (*Ibid.*, p. 19.)

Friend. — But does not this imply the necessity of all events?

Pred. — “I will not scruple to own that the will of God lays a necessity on all things, and that everything he wills necessarily comes to pass.” (*Calvin’s Inst.*, b. 3, c. 24, sec. 8.)

Friend. — Does sin then necessarily come to pass?

Pred. — Undoubtedly: For “the almighty power of God extends itself to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men.” (*Assembly’s Catechism*, c. 5.)

Friend. — I grant, God foresaw the first man would fall.

Pred. — Nay, “God not only foresaw that Adam would fall, but also ordained that he should.” (*Calvin’s Inst.*, b. 3, c. 23, sec. 7.)

Friend. — I know God permitted Adam’s fall.

Pred. — I tell you, “he fell not only by the permission, but also by the appointment, of God.” (*Calvin Responsio ad Calumnias Nebulonis cujusdam ad Articulum primum.*) “He sinned because God so ordained, because the Lord saw good.” (*Calvin’s Inst.*, b. 3, c. 24, sec. 8.)

Friend. — But do not those who differ from you raise many objections against you as to this point?

Pred. — Yes: “Those poisonous dogs vomit out many things against God.” (*Ibid.*, b. 3, c. 23, sec. 2.) “They deny that the Scripture says God decreed Adam’s fall. They say he might have chose either to fall or not; and that God fore-ordained only to treat him according to his desert: As if God had created the noblest of all his creatures, without fore-ordaining what should become of him!” (*Ibid.*, sec. 7.)

Friend. — Did God then make Adam on purpose that he might fall?

Pred. — Undoubtedly. “God made Adam and Eve to this very purpose, that they might be tempted and led into sin. And by force of his decree, it could not otherwise be but they must sin.” (*Piscatoris Dispute. Praedest., Praef.*, p. 6.)

Friend. — But do not you ground God’s decree on God’s foreknowledge rather than his will?

Pred. — No: “God foresees nothing but what he has decreed, and his decree precedes his knowledge.” (*Piscat. Disput. Praedest.*)

Friend. — Well, this may truly be termed a *horrible decree*.

Pred. — “I confess it is a horrible decree; yet no one can deny but God foreknew Adam’s fall, and therefore foreknew it, because he had ordained it so by his own decree.” (*Calv. Inst.*, b. 3, c. 23, sec. 7.)

Friend. — Do you believe, then, that God has by his own positive decree, not only elected some men to life, but also reprobated all the rest?

Pred. — Most surely, if I believe one, I believe the other. “Many indeed (thinking to excuse God) own election, and yet deny reprobation; but this is quite silly and childish. For without reprobation, election itself cannot stand; whom God passes by, those he reprobates.” (*Calv. Inst.*, b. 3, c. 23, sec. 1.)

Friend. — Pray explain what you mean by election and reprobation.

Pred. — With all my heart. “All men are not created for the same end; but some are fore-ordained to eternal life; others to eternal damnation. So according as every man was created for the one end or the other, we say he was elected or predestinated to life, or reprobated, that is, predestinated to destruction.” (*Ibid.*, c. 21, sec. 1.)

Friend. — Pray repeat your meaning.

Pred. — “God hath once for all appointed, by an eternal and unchangeable decree, to whom he would give salvation, and whom he would devote to destruction.” (*Ibid.*, sec. 7.)

Friend. — Did God make any man on purpose that he might be damned?

Pred. — Did not I tell you before? “God’s first constitution was, that some should be destined to eternal ruin; and to this end their sins were ordained, and denial of grace in order to their sins.” (*Zanchius de Natura Dei*, p. 553, 554.)

Friend. — But is not God’s predestining men to life or death grounded on his foreknowledge?

Pred. — “So the vulgar think; that God, as he foresees every man will deserve, elects them to life, or devotes them to death and damnation.” (*Calv. Inst.*, b. 3, c. 22, sec. 1.)

Friend. — And do not you think that reprobation, at least, is grounded on God’s foreknowing men’s sins?

Pred. — No indeed: “God of his own good pleasure ordains that many should be born, who are from the womb devoted to inevitable damnation. If any man pretend that God’s foreknowledge lays them under no necessity of being damned, but rather that he decreed their damnation because he foreknew their wickedness, I grant that God’s foreknowledge alone lays no necessity on the creature; but eternal life and death depend on the will rather than the foreknowledge of God. If God only foreknew all things that relate to all men, and did not decree and ordain them also, then

it might be inquired whether or no his foreknowledge necessitates the thing foreknown. But seeing he therefore foreknows all things that will come to pass, because he has decreed they shall come to pass, it is vain to contend about foreknowledge, since it so plain all things come to pass by God's positive decree." (*Ibid.*, c. 23, s. 6.)

Friend. — But if God has positively decreed to damn the greater part of mankind, why does he call upon them to repent and be saved?

Pred. — "As God has his effectual call, whereby he gives the elect the salvation to which he ordained them, so he has his judgments towards the reprobates, whereby he executes his decree concerning them. As many, therefore, as he created to live miserably, and then perish everlastingly; these, that they may be brought to the end for which they were created, he sometimes deprives of the possibility of hearing the word, and at other times, by the preaching thereof, blinds and stupefies them the more." (*Ibid.*, c. 24, s. 12.)

Friend. — How is this? I say, if God has created them for never-ending death, why does he call to them to turn and live?

Pred. — "He calls to them, that they may be more deaf; he kindles a light, that they may be the more blind; he brings his doctrine to them, that they may be more ignorant; and applies the remedy to them, that they may not be healed." (*Ibid.*, b. 3, c. 24, s. 13.)

Friend. — Enough, enough. Yet you do not make God the author of sin!

Pred. — No certainly: "God cannot be termed the author of sin, though he is the cause of those actions which are sins." (*Petri Martyris Vermillii Com. in Roman.*, p. 413.)

Friend. — How is he the cause of them then?

Pred. — Two ways: First, by his eternal, unchangeable decree; Secondly, by his present irresistible power.

Friend. — Did God then fore-ordain the sins of any man?

Pred. — “Both the reprobates and the elect were fore-ordained to sin, as sin, that the glory of God might be declared thereby.” (*Zanchius de Nat. Dei.*, p. 555.) “The reprobates,” more especially, “who were predestinated to damnation, and the causes of damnation, and created to that end, that they may live wickedly, and be vessels full of the dregs of sin.” (*Piscator contra Tauffium*, p. 47.)

Friend. — But surely the sins of the elect were not fore-ordained?

Pred. — Yes, but they were: “For we neither can do more good than we do, nor less evil than we do; because God from eternity has precisely decreed that both the good and the evil should be so done.” (*Piscatoris Responsio ad Amicam Duplicationem Conradi Vorstii*, p. 176.)

Friend. — I understand you, as to God’s decreeing sin. But how is his irresistible power now concerned in the sins of men?

Pred. — “God is the author of that action which is sinful, by his irresistible will.” (*Dr. Twisse*, par. 3, p. 21.)

Friend. — How do you mean?

Pred. — “God procures adultery, cursings, lyings.” (*Piscat. Responsio ad Apologiam Bertii.*) “He supplies wicked men with opportunities of sinning, and inclines their hearts thereto. He blinds, deceives, and seduces them. He, by his working on their hearts, bends and stirs them up to do evil.” (*Pet. Martyr. Ver. Comment. in Rom.*, pp. 36, 413.) And thus “thieves, murderers, and other malefactors are God’s instruments, which he uses to execute what he hath decreed in himself” (*Calv. Inst.*, b. 1, c. 17, s. 5.)

Friend. — Do you not then charge God himself with sin?

Pred. — No: “God necessitates them only to the act of sin, not to the deformity of sin.” (*Twissi Vindiciae*, par. 3, p. 22.) Besides, “when God

makes angels or men sin, he does not sin himself, because he does not break any law. For God is under no law, and therefore cannot sin.” (*Zuinglius in Serm. de Provid.*, c. 5, 6.)

Friend. — But how does God make angels or men to sin?

Pred. — “The devil and wicked men are so held in on every side with the hand of God, that they cannot conceive, or contrive, or execute any mischief, any farther than God himself doth not permit only, but command. Nor are they only held in fetters, but compelled also, as with a bridle, to perform obedience to those commands.” (*Calv. Inst.*, b. 1, c. 17, s. 11.)

Friend. — This is true Turkish doctrine, and ought so to be exploded as that used to be in these words: —

“I do anathematize the blasphemy of Mahomet, which saith that God deceiveth whom he will, and whom he will he leadeth to that which is good. Himself doeth what he willeth, and is himself the cause of all good and all evil. Fate and destiny govern all things.” (*Nicetus Saracenita.*)

Pred. — Nay, our doctrine is more ancient than Mahomet: It was maintained by St. Augustine.

Friend. — Augustine speaks sometimes for it, and sometimes against it. But all antiquity for the four first centuries is against you, as is the whole Eastern Church to this day; and the Church of England, both in her Catechism, Articles, and Homilies. And so are divers of our most holy Martyrs, Bishop Hooper and Bishop Latimer in particular.

Pred. — But does not antiquity say, Judas was predestinated to damnation?

Friend. — Quite the contrary. St. Chrysostom’s express words are, “Judas, my beloved, was at first a child of the kingdom, and heard it said to him with the disciples,” Ye shall sit on twelve thrones; “but afterwards he became a child of hell.”

Pred. — However, you will own that Esau was predestinated to destruction.

Friend. — Indeed I will not. Some of your own writers believe he was finally saved, which was the general opinion of the ancient Fathers. And that scripture, “Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,” plainly relates not to their persons but their posterities.

But, supposing Esau or Judas to be damned, what is he damned for?

Pred. — Without question, for unbelief. For as we are saved by faith alone, so unbelief is the only damning sin.

Friend. — By what faith are you saved?

Pred. — By faith in Christ, who gave himself for me.

Friend. — But did he give himself for Esau and Judas? If not, you say they are damned for not believing a lie.

This consideration it was which forced Archbishop Usher to cry out, “What would not a man fly unto, rather than yield, that Christ did not die for the reprobates; and that none but the elect had any kind of title to him; and yet many thousands should be bound in conscience to believe that he died for them, and tied to accept him for their Redeemer and Savior? Whereby they should have believed that which in itself is most untrue, and laid hold of that in which they had no kind of interest.”

Pred. — But what then do you mean by the words, election and reprobation?

Friend. — I mean this: First, God did decree from the beginning to elect or choose, in Christ, all that should believe to salvation. And this decree proceeds from his own goodness, and is not built upon any goodness in the creature. Secondly: God did from the beginning decree to reprobate all who should obstinately and finally continue in unbelief.

Pred. — What then do you think of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation?

Friend. — I think it cannot be found in holy writ, and that it is a plant which bears dismal fruit. An instance of which we have in Calvin himself; who confesses that he procured the burning to death of Michael Servetus, purely for differing from him in opinion in matters of religion.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

AN ANTINOMIAN AND HIS FRIEND.

ANTINOMIAN. — WELL met, my friend. I am glad to see you. But I am sorry to hear you have changed your religion.

FRIEND. — Changed my religion! I do not know what you mean.

Ant. — Why, you once believed, we are saved by faith.

Friend. — Undoubtedly; and so I do still.

Ant. — Do you believe, then, that the “whole work of man’s salvation was accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross?”³³

Friend. — I believe, that, by that one offering, he made a full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

Ant. — But do you believe that “Christ’s blood and our sins went away together?”

Friend. — To say the truth, I do not understand it.

Ant. — No! Why, did not Christ, “when he was upon the cross, take away, put an end to, blot out, and utterly destroy, all our sins forever?”

Friend. — He did then pay the price, for the sake of which, all who truly believe in him are now saved from their sins; and, if they endure to the end, shall be saved everlastingly. Is this what you mean?

Ant. — I mean, He did then “heal, take away, put an end to, and utterly destroy, all our sins.”

Friend. — Did he then heal the wound before it was made, and put an end to our sins before they had a beginning? This is so glaring, palpable an absurdity, that I cannot conceive how you can swallow it.

Ant. — I thought you would come to your “carnal reasoning.” What has faith to do with reasoning?

Friend. — Do you ever read the Bible? Does not God himself say to sinners, “Come now, and let us reason together?” (Isaiah 1:18.) Does not our Lord reason continually with the Scribes and Pharisees; St. Peter with the Jews; (Acts 2:14, etc.;) and St. Paul both with the Jews and Gentiles? Nay, is not great part of his Epistles, both to the Romans and to the Galatians, and the far greatest part of that to the Hebrews, one entire chain of reasoning?

Ant. — You may do what you please. But I do not reason; I believe.

Friend. — Now, I believe and reason too: For I find no inconsistency between them. And I would just as soon put out my eyes to secure my faith, as lay aside my reason.

Ant. — But do not men abuse their reason continually? Therefore it is best to have nothing to do with it.

Friend. — So, now you are doing the very thing you condemn! You are reasoning against reasoning. And no wonder; for it is impossible, without reasoning, either to prove or disprove any thing.

Ant. — But can you deny the fact? Do not men abuse their reason continually?

Friend. — They do. The fact I deny not. But I deny the inference drawn from it. For if we must lay aside whatever men abuse continually, we must lay aside the Bible; nay, and meat and drink too.

Ant. — Well, but come to the point. In what do you trust for justification and salvation?

Friend. — In the alone merits of Christ, which are mine, if I truly believe that he loved me, and gave himself for me.

Ant. — *If!* So you make salvation conditional!

Friend. — And do not you? Else you make God a liar: For his express words are, “He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” What is this but to say, *If* thou believest, (there is the condition,) thou shalt be saved?

Ant. — But I do not like that word, *condition*.

Friend. — Then find a better, and we will lay it aside.

Ant. — However, I insist upon it, “nothing else beside faith is required” in order to justification and salvation.

Friend. — What do you mean by *nothing else is required*?

Ant. — I mean, “there is but one duty, which is that of believing. One must do nothing, but quietly attend the voice of the Lord. The gates of heaven are shut upon workers, and open to believers. If we do nothing for heaven, we do as much as God requires.”

Friend. — Do you really mean, we are to do nothing, in order to present or final salvation, but “only to believe?”

Ant. — Do not I tell you so? “To believe certainly, that Christ suffered death for us, is enough; we want no more. We are justified by our

submitting in our judgments to the truth of God's grace in Christ Jesus. It is not necessary that a man do any works, that he may be justified and saved. God doth not require thee to do anything, that thou mayest be saved or justified. The law sets thee to work; but; the gospel binds thee to do nothing at all. Nay, the worlds are not only not required, but forbidden. God forbids us to work for justification. And when the Apostle Paul presses men to believe, it is as much as if he had bid them not to work."

Friend. — Let Paul be permitted to answer for himself. In the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, he relates how our Lord sent him "to open the eyes of the Gentiles, — that they might receive remission of sins." (Verses 17, 18.) "Whereupon," saith he, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but showed — to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Observe: He "obeyed the heavenly vision," by teaching the Gentiles, before they were justified, before they had "received forgiveness of sins," to "repent and do works meet for repentance." So far was he from "bidding them not to work," while he was "pressing them to believe."

Ant. — You are got to your "carnal reasoning" again.

Friend. — *Carnal reasoning*, I perceive, is a cant term, which you use when you know not what else to say. But I have not done with this instance yet. Did St. Paul, indeed, preach to those Heathens according to the instructions given him from heaven, or did he not?

Ant. — Without doubt, he did; otherwise he would have been "disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

Friend. — How then say you that a Minister of Christ ought to preach nothing but "Believe, believe?" and, that to tell men of doing anything, is "preaching the law?" Do you not herein condemn, not only the great Apostle, but also him that sent and commanded him "thus to preach?"

Ant. — Why, surely, you would not have us to be "under the law!"

Friend. — I fear you know not what that expression means. St. Paul uses it thrice in his Epistle to the Romans, five times in that to the Galatians, and in one passage of his former Epistle to the Corinthians; where he declares in what sense he was himself “under the law,” and in what sense he was not. “Unto them that are under the law,” (that still adhere to the whole Jewish dispensation,) “I became as under the law,” (I conformed to their ceremonies,) “that I might gain them that are under the law: But unto them that are without the law,” (unto the Gentiles or Heathens,) “as without; the law: Being,” meantime, “not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.” (1 Corinthians 9:20, 21.) It is plain, therefore, the Apostle was “under the law” of Christ, though he was not “under the law” of ceremonies.

Ant. — But does not St. Paul say to the believers at Rome, “Ye are not under the law, but under grace?”

Friend. — He does; and his meaning is, “Ye are not under the Jewish, but the gracious Christian, dispensation:” As also in the next verse, where he says, “We are not under the law, but under grace.”

Ant. — But what does he mean, when he says to the Galatians, “Before faith came, we were kept under the law?”

Friend. — Doubtless he means, we were kept under the Jewish dispensation, till we believed in Christ. (3:19.) And so we read in the next chapter, “When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made under the law,” (the Jewish dispensation,) “to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;” (verses 4, 5;) might serve God, without fear, in righteousness and holiness, with a free, loving, child-like spirit.

Ant. — You cannot persuade me to this; I know better. The law of works (the moral law, as you call it) is nothing to me. “From my demand of the law, no man is obliged to go one step, to give away one farthing, to eat, or omit one morsel. For what did our Lord do with the law? He abolished it.”

Friend. — However, ought not we, after we believe in him, to obey all the commandments of Christ?

Ant. — *Obey! law! works! commandments!* O what “legalness is in your spirit!” So, I suppose, “your comforts vanish away when you are not assured that you obey all Christ’s commandments!” On the contrary, “a spiritual man beholdeth justifying grace in believing, without his obedience to commands for external worship and good works.”

Friend. — But how does this agree with numberless texts of Scripture? in particular, with those words of our Lord, “Think not that I am come to destroy” (or abolish) “the law: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:17, etc.)

Ant. — I tell you plainly, I will not reason.

Friend. — That is as much as to say, “I will not be convinced: I love darkness rather than light.”

Ant. — No; it is you that are in darkness. I was so till a few weeks since. But; now my eyes are opened. I see my liberty now. Now I am free. I was in bondage long enough.

Friend. — What are you free from?

Ant. — From sin, and hell, and the devil, and the law.

Friend. — You put the law of God in goodly company. But how came you to be free from the law?

Ant. — Christ made me free from it.

Friend. — What! from his own law? Pray, where is that written?

Ant. — Here, Galatians 3:13: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.”

Friend. — What is this to the purpose? This tells me, that “Christ; hath redeemed us” (all that believe) “from the curse,” or punishment, justly due to our past transgressions of God’s law. But it speaks not a word of redeeming us from the law, any more than from love or heaven.

But what do you mean by bondage?

Ant. — Why, the being bound to keep the law.

Friend. — You have no tittle of Scripture for this. Bondage to fear and bondage to sin are mentioned there; and bondage to the ceremonial law of Moses: But, according to your sense of the word, all the angels in heaven are in bondage.

Ant. — Well, I am not bound. St. Paul himself says to believers, “Why are ye subject to ordinances?” (Colossians 2:20.)

Friend. — True; that is, Why are you Christian believers subject to Jewish ordinances? such as those which are mentioned in the very next verse, “Touch not, taste not, handle not.”

Ant. — Nay, that is not all. I say, “Outward things do nothing avail to salvation.” This is plain; for “if love to God, and love to our neighbor, and relieving the poor, be altogether unprofitable and unavailable either to justification or salvation; then these outward works, in submitting to outward ordinances, are much less available.”

Friend. — Do you speak of the ordinances of Christ?

Ant. — I do. “They bring in the most dangerous kind of Popery, and pervert the pure gospel of Christ, who persuade men, that if they do not submit to the ordinances of the Lord Jesus, he will not confess them before his Father.” And I affirm, “it is better not to practice outward

ordinances at all, than to practice them on these gospel-destroying principles, to the ruining of our souls.”

Friend. — What scripture do you produce for this?

Ant. — I wish you would not build so much upon the letter: It is your letter-learning too makes you talk of inherent righteousness.

Friend. — Do you say then, a believer has no inherent righteousness?

Ant. — That I do. I say, “God will save us to the utmost, without any righteousness or holiness of our own.” To look for inherent righteousness, “is to deny the Spirit, and trample under foot the blood of the covenant. Believers have not any inherent righteousness in them. Our righteousness is nothing but the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.”

Friend. — Now, I believe that Christ by his Spirit works righteousness in all those to whom faith is imputed for righteousness.

Ant. — “By no means; all our righteousness is in Christ. It is wholly imputed, not inherent. We are always righteous in Christ, but never righteous in ourselves.”

Friend. — Is not, then, every believer righteous or holy?

Ant. — Doubtless; but he is holy in Christ, not in himself.

Friend. — Does he not live a holy life; and is he not holy of heart?

Ant. — Most certainly.

Friend. — Is he not, by plain consequence, holy in himself?

Ant. — No, no, in Christ only; not holy in himself: He has no holiness at all in himself.

Friend. — Has he not in him the love of God, and of his neighbor; yea, the whole image of God?

Ant. — He has. But this is not gospel holiness.

Friend. — What vain jangling is this! You cavil at the name, while you allow the whole thing I contend for. You allow, a believer is holy both in heart and life. This is all I mean by inherent righteousness or holiness.

Ant. — But I tell you, this is not gospel holiness. Gospel holiness is faith.

Friend. — Stand to this, and you still give up the whole cause. For, on your supposition, I argue thus: — Faith is holiness or righteousness; But faith is in every believer: Therefore, holiness or righteousness is in every believer.

Ant. — Alas, alas! I pity you. Take my word for it, you are in utter darkness. You know nothing yet of true faith; nothing at all about it.

Friend. — Will you then be so kind as to explain it to me?

Ant. — I will. I will make it as clear as the sun. I will show you the very marrow of that doctrine which “I recommend, with all my heart, to all, as the most wholesome doctrine of Jesus Christ.

“Many think they know it, when they have but crude, carnal, indigested notions of it. And they imagine we rest contented with such a faith as theirs; namely, that Christ has died to ward off the wrath of God, to purchase his favor, and, as an effect of that, to obtain certain inherent qualities and dispositions, to make us meet for the kingdom of heaven. Was this our faith, it would be requisite to seek after this sort of sanctification, and not to be at rest, without we felt something of it. But, on the contrary, we believe that the blood shed upon the cross has put away and blotted out all our sins, and that then there was an everlasting righteousness brought in: By believing which, our hearts and consciences are made as perfectly clean as though we had never sinned. In this consists true purity of soul, and not in habitual qualities. And who so are thus

made pure and perfect are delivered from the dominion of sin. They do also bear forth the fruits of righteousness, not in order to become more holy, but because they are perfectly holy, through faith. It is true, we have still the vile, sinful body, which continually disposes the mind to evil. But the blood of Jesus makes us free from sin, and, as it were, destroys the connection.”

Friend. — Of all the accounts I have ever yet heard, this is the most “crude and indigested.” But let us go over it step by step. You first described what you judge a false faith, viz., “A faith that Christ hath died, to ward off” (or appease) “the wrath of God, and to purchase his favor;” (suppose, for me, a lost sinner;) “and as an effect of that,” (of God’s favor bought with the blood of Christ,) “to obtain” for me “certain inherent qualities and dispositions, to make me meet for the kingdom of heaven.” Now, how do you prove this to be a false faith?

Ant. — Easily enough; for men “are obliged to support it by frames, feelings, and works.”

Friend. — And did not you allow, just now, that whoever has true faith is “holy both in heart and life?” that he has in him “the love of God and of his neighbor; yea, the whole image of God?”

Ant. — I did. And what then?

Friend. — Why, then you have abundantly confuted yourself: For you have allowed, that true faith not only cannot be supported, but cannot exist, no, not for one moment, without “certain inherent qualities and dispositions,” (viz., the love of God and of all mankind,) “which makes us meet for the kingdom of heaven.” You have allowed, that true faith cannot subsist without a holy frame of heart, a continuance in good works, and a feeling sense of God’s love to me, a sinner.

Ant. — I hear you. Go on.

Friend. — You said next, “Was this our faith, it would be requisite to seek after this sort of sanctification.” From your own words it appears, that

this is your faith, if you have any true faith at all. See then that you “seek after this sort of sanctification,” viz., the love of God and of your neighbor. For if you can be at rest, though you feel nothing of it, it is plain your heart is not clean, but hardened.

Ant. — You may say what you please. You know no better.

Friend. — You went on: “On the contrary, we believe that the blood shed upon the cross has put away and blotted out all our sins.” Why, who believes otherwise? If you mean only, that Christ then put away the punishment of all our sins, who believe in him; what a marvelous discovery is this! I pray, whom doth this arguing reprove?

Ant. — It reproves you, who deny that “an everlasting righteousness was then brought in.”

Friend. — I do not deny it: No more than you understand it. But I ask, in what sense was it “brought in?” What was it brought into? Was it then first brought into the world? You cannot say this, without saying that all who went out of the world before that hour were lost. Or was it brought into the souls of believers? Then believers have an inward or inherent righteousness. You had better, therefore, let this text alone. It will do no service at all to your cause.

Ant. — I see plain you are as blind as a beetle still. I am afraid your head-knowledge will destroy you. Did not I tell you, “Our hearts and consciences are made perfectly clean by our believing; and that in this consists true purity of soul, and not in habitual qualities? Thus we are made perfectly holy.” And though “the vile, sinful body continually disposes the mind to evil,” yet “the blood of Christ makes us free from sin, and, as it were, destroys the connection.”

Friend. — Destroys the connection of what? I doubt you have stumbled upon another word which you do not understand. But whether you understand yourself or no, it is sure I do not understand you. How can my mind at the same time it is “continually disposed to evil,” be “free from sin, perfectly clean, perfectly holy?”

Ant. — O the dulness of some men! I do not mean really holy, but holy by imputation. I told you plainly, the holiness of which we speak is not in us, but in Christ. “The fruits of the Spirit, (commonly called sanctification,) such as love, gentleness, long-suffering, goodness, meekness, temperance, neither make us holy before God, nor in our own consciences.”

Friend. — I know these cannot atone for one sin. This is done by the blood of Christ alone: For the sake of which, God forgives, and works these in us by faith. Do I reach your meaning now?

Ant. — No, no; I wonder at your ignorance. I mean, “we are not made good or holy by any inward qualities or dispositions: But being made pure and holy in our consciences, by believing in Christ, we bear forth, inwardly and outwardly, the fruits of holiness.” Now, I hope, you understand me.

Friend. — I hope not. For, if I do, you talk as gross nonsense and contradiction as ever came out of the mouth of man.

Ant. — How so?

Friend. — You say, “We are not made good or holy by any inward qualities or dispositions.” No! are we not made good by inward goodness? (observe, we are not speaking of justification, but sanctification;) holy, by inward holiness? meek, by inward meekness? gentle, by inward gentleness? And are not all these, if they are anything at all, “inward qualities or dispositions?”

Again: Just after denying that we have any inward holiness, you say, “We are made holy in our consciences, and bear forth, inwardly and outwardly, the fruits of holiness.” What heaps of self-contradictions are here!

Ant. — You do not take me right. I mean, these inward dispositions “are not our holiness. For we are not more holy, if we have more love to God and man, nor less holy, if we have less.”

Friend. — No! Does not a believer increase in holiness, as he increases in the love of God and man?

Ant. — I say, No. “The very moment he is justified, he is wholly sanctified. And he is neither more nor less holy, from that hour, to the day of his death. Entire justification and entire sanctification are in the same instant. And neither of them is thenceforth capable either of increase or decrease.

Friend. — I thought we were to grow in grace!

Ant. — “We are so; but not in holiness. The moment we are justified, we are as pure in heart as ever we shall be. A newborn babe is as pure in heart as a father in Christ. There is no difference.”

Friend. — You do well to except against Scripture and reason. For till a man has done with them, he can never swallow this. I understand your doctrine now, far better than I like it. In the main, you are talking much and saying nothing; laboring, as if you had found out the most important truths, and such as none ever knew before. And what does all this come to at the last? A mere, empty “strife of words.” All that is really uncommon in your doctrine is a heap of broad absurdities, in most of which you grossly contradict; yourselves, as well as Scripture and common sense. In the meantime, you boast and vapor, as if “ye were the men, and wisdom should die with you.” I pray God to “humble you, and prove you, and show you what is in your hearts!”

A

SECOND DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

AN ANTINOMIAN AND HIS FRIEND.

“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law.”
(Romans 3:31.)

FRIEND. — WELL met! You have had time to consider. What think you of our last conference?

ANTINOMIAN. — I think, “the giving of scandalous names has no warrant from Scripture.” (*Mr. Cudworth’s Dialogue*, p. 2.)

Friend. — *Scandalous names!*

Ant. — Yes; you called me Antinomian. But “our Savior bids me not return railing for railing.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — St. Peter does, and that is all one. But how is that a *scandalous name*? I think it is properly your own; for it means, “one that speaks against the law.” And this you did at that time very largely. But pray what would you have me call you?

Ant. — “A Preacher of God’s righteousness.” (*Ibid.*, page 1.)

Friend. — What do you call *me* then?

Ant. — “A Preacher of inherent righteousness.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — That is, in opposition to God’s righteousness. So you mean, a Preacher of such righteousness as is inconsistent with that righteousness of God which is by faith.

Ant. — True: For, “I plainly perceive you know but one sort of righteousness, that is, the righteousness of inherent qualities, dispositions, and works. And this is the reason why the language of the Holy Ghost seems foolishness unto you; even because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” (*Ibid.*, pages 11, 12.)

Friend. — Are you absolutely sure that this is the reason why I do not think or speak as you do?

Ant. — The thing itself speaks: “Thou hast forgotten the Lord, and hast trusted in falsehood. Therefore, saith the Lord, I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear.” (*Ibid.*, page 1.)

Friend. — Peremptory enough! But you will “not return railing for railing!” so, out of mere tenderness and respect, you pronounce me a “natural man,” and one who “hath forgotten the Lord,” and hath “trusted in falsehood!”

Ant. — And so you are, if you do not believe in Christ. Pray let me ask you one question: Do you believe that “Christ hath appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?”

Friend. — I do.

Ant. — But in what sense?

Friend. — I believe he made, by that one oblation of himself, once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. And yet he hath not “done all which was necessary for the” absolute, infallible, inevitable “salvation of the whole

world." If he had, the whole world would be saved; whereas, "he that believeth not shall be damned."

Ant. — But is it not said, "'He was wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes we are healed?' And is he not 'the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world?'" (Page 4.)

Friend. — Yes. But this does not prove that he "put an end to our sins before they had a beginning!" (*Ibid.*)

Ant. — O ignorance! Did not our sins begin in Adam?

Friend. — Original sin did. But Christ will not put an end to this before the end of the world. And, as to actual, if I now feel anger at you in my heart, and it breaks out in reproachful words; to say Christ put an end to this sin before it began, is a glaring absurdity.

Ant. — But I say, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And St. Peter says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree."

Friend. — To what purpose do you heap these texts together? to prove that Christ "put an end to our sins" before they had a beginning? If not, spare your labor; for they are quite foreign to the present question.

Ant. — However; that is not foreign to the present question, which you said the other day; viz., that "Christ has only redeemed us from the punishment due to our past transgressions." (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — I neither said so, nor thought so. You either carelessly or willfully misrepresent my words. On your quoting that text, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law," I replied in these terms: "What is this to the purpose? This tells me that Christ hath redeemed us (all that believe) from the curse or punishment justly due to our past transgressions of God's law. But it speaks not a word of redeeming us

from the law, any more than from love or heaven.” (*First Dialogue*, page 271.)

Ant. — *Past transgressions!* “Then who must redeem us from those which are to come, since there remains no more sacrifice for sin?” (*Cudworth’s Dialogue*.)

Friend. — The same Jesus Christ, by the same merit of that one sacrifice, then applied to the conscience when we believe, as you yourself have often asserted. But whatever punishment he redeems us from, that punishment supposes sin to precede; which must exist first, before there is any possibility of its being either punished or pardoned.

Ant. — You have a strange way of talking. You say, “We are forgiven for the sake of the blood of Christ.” (*Ibid.*, page 5.)

Friend. — And do not you?

Ant. — No; I say, “We have forgiveness in his blood, and not merely for the sake of it.”

Friend. — You are perfectly welcome so to say.

Ant. — Well, enough of this. Let me ask you another question. Do you affirm, that salvation is “conditional?” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — I affirm, “He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not; shall be damned.” And can you or any other deny this? If not, why do you fight about a word? especially after I have told you, “Find me a better, and I will lay this aside.”

Ant. — “Then this faith leaves you just in the same state it found you; that is, still having the condition to perform.” (*Ibid.*, page 5.)

Friend. — Not so; for faith itself is that condition.

Ant. — Nay, “faith is only necessary in order to receive forgiveness or salvation; not to procure it by way of condition.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — Enough, enough. You grant all that I desire. If you allow that “faith is necessary in order to receive forgiveness or salvation,” this is the whole of what I mean by terming it a condition. A procuring or meritorious cause is quite another thing.

Ant. — But you say that “faith is not true faith, unless it be furnished with love.” (*Ibid.*, page 6.)

Friend. — *Furnished with love!* Where did you pick up that awkward phrase? I never used it in my life. But I say, you have not true faith, unless your faith “worketh by love;” and that though “I have all faith, so that I could even remove mountains, yet if I have no love I am nothing.”

Ant. — Will you answer me one question more? Is not a believer free from the law?

Friend. — He is free from the Jewish ceremonial law; that is, he does not, and need not, observe it. And he is free from the curse of the moral law; but he is not free from observing it. He still walks according to this rule, and so much the more, because God has written it in his heart.

Ant. — But St. Paul says, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” (*Ibid.*, page 8.)

Friend. — He is so. He put an end to the Mosaic dispensation, and established a better covenant, in virtue whereof “faith is counted for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Ant. — But still “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,” (Galatians 3:10,) are they not?

Friend. — They are; as many as still “seek to be justified by the works of the law;” that is, by any works antecedent to, or independent on, faith in Christ.

Ant. — “But does not the Apostle say farther, ‘Ye are become dead to the law?’ (Romans 7:4.)” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — You are so, as to its condemning power, if you truly believe in Christ. For “there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” But not as to its directing power; for you “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” You “love him, and keep his commandments.”

Ant. — That is not all. I maintain, “a believer is entirely free from the law.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — By what scripture do you prove that?

Ant. — By Galatians 4:4, 5: “God sent forth his Son, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.”

Friend. — The plain meaning of this I mentioned before: “‘God sent forth his Son, made under the law,’ (the Jewish dispensation,) ‘to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;’ might ‘serve God without fear, in righteousness and holiness,’ with a free, loving, child-like spirit.” (*First Dialogue*, page 270.)

Ant. — So you say, “Christ was made only under the Jewish dispensation, to redeem the Jews from that dispensation.” (*Cudworth’s Dialogue*, pages 8, 9.)

Friend. — I do not say so. By inserting “only” you quite pervert my words. You cannot deny, that Christ “was made under the Jewish dispensation.” But I never affirmed, He was “made under it only to redeem the Jews from that dispensation.”

Ant. — Was he made “under the moral law” at all?

Friend. — No doubt he was. For the Jewish dispensation included the moral, as well as ceremonial, law.

Ant. — Then the case is plain. “If he was under the moral law, we are redeemed from the moral law.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — That does not follow. “He redeemed them that were under” this, as well as the ceremonial, “law.” But from what did he redeem them? Not “from the law;” but “from guilt, and sin, and hell.” In other words, He redeemed them from the “condemnation of this law,” not from “obedience to it.” In this respect they are still, “not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.” (1 Corinthians 9:21.)

Ant. — “Under the law to Christ!” No. The Greek word is *ἐννομος Χριστω*, *in a law to Christ*; that is, the law of love and liberty.” (*Ibid.*)

Friend. — Very true. This is the exact thing I mean. You have spoken the very thought of my heart.

Ant. — It may be so. But “a believer is free from the law of commandments,” call it moral, or what you please.

Friend. — Do you mean only, that he obeys the law of Christ, by free choice, and not by constraint? that he keeps the commandments of God, out of love, not fear? If so, you may triumph without an opponent. But if you mean, he is free from obeying that law, then your liberty is a liberty to disobey God.

Ant. — God forbid. It is “a liberty to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the lust (or desire) of the flesh.” (*Ibid.*, page 8.)

Friend. — Why, this is the thing I am contending for. The very thing I daily assert is this, that Christian liberty is a liberty to obey God, and not to commit sin.

Ant. — But how do you understand those words of St. Paul, that Christ “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way?” (Colossians 2:14.)

Friend. — I understand them of the Jewish ordinances; as it is plain St. Paul himself did, by the inference he immediately draws: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink,” (the ordinances touching these being now “taken out of the way,”) “or in respect of an holy-day,” (once observed,) “or of the new moon, or of the” (Jewish) “Sabbaths.” (Verse 16.)

Ant. — But how could the “handwriting” of these “ordinances” be said to be “against us,” or to be “contrary to us?”

Friend. — I will not insist on the criticism of those who render the words, “over against us,” as alluding to that “handwriting on the wall” which appeared “over against King Belshazzar.” The words of St. Peter suffice, which will bear no dispute, who, speaking of these same ordinances, calls them “a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.” (Acts 15:5, 10.)

Ant. — You must then understand those words of our Lord, of the moral law alone: “Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matthew 5:17, 18.) But I say, our Lord has fulfilled every jot and tittle of this law too.

Friend. — I grant he has. But do you infer from thence, “therefore he has destroyed the law?” Our Lord’s arguing is the very reverse of yours. He mentions his coming to “fulfil the law,” as an evident proof that he did not come to “destroy” or “take it away.”

But suppose you could get over the former verse, what can you do with the following? — “Verily I say unto you, One jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till heaven and earth pass;” or, which comes to the same thing, “till all be fulfilled.” The former evasion will do you no service with regard to this clause. For the word “all” in this does not refer to the law, but to heaven and earth and “all things” therein: The original sentence running thus: **Εως αν παντα γενηται**. Nor indeed is the word **γενηται** well rendered by the ambiguous word “fulfilled,” which would

easily induce an English reader to suppose it was the same word that was rendered so just before; it should rather be translated *accomplished*, *finished*, or *done*; as they will be in the great and terrible day of the Lord, when the “earth and the heaven shall flee from his face, and there shall be no place found for them.”

Ant. — But why did you say, my account of sanctification was crude and indigested? (*First Dialogue*, page 273.)

Friend. — Let me hear it again. If it be better digested than it was, I shall rejoice.

Ant. — “Our minds are either defiled and impure, or pure and holy. The question is, Which way is a defiled and impure mind to be made a good one? You say, ‘By love, meekness, greatness.’ I say, By believing in Christ. By this, my conscience becomes purged and clean, as though I had not committed sin. And such a purged conscience bears forth the fruit of love, meekness, gentleness, etc. It is therefore absurd to say, We are made good by goodness, meek by meekness, or gentle by gentleness. We are only denominated so from these fruits of the Spirit.” (*Cudworth’s Dialogue*, page 10.)

Friend. — You have mended the matter a little, and not much.

For,

1. “The question,” say you, “is, Which way is a defiled and impure mind to be made a good one?” Nothing less. The present question between you and me is this, and no other, Has a believer any goodness in him at all? any love, meekness, or gentleness?

2. “You say, An impure mind is made good by goodness, etc. I say, By believing in Christ.” This is mere playing upon words. If the question stood thus, “Which way is an evil mind made good?” you are conscious I should make the very same reply, — “By believing in Jesus Christ.”

3. “By this my conscience becomes purged and clean, as though I had not committed sin.” Here you run away from the question, notwithstanding that express caution, “Observe, we are not speaking of justification, but sanctification.” (*First Dialogue*, page 275.)

4. "And such a purged conscience bears forth the fruit of love, meekness, gentleness," etc. You here give up the cause. You grant all I desire, viz., that "there are these dispositions in all believers." It avails nothing therefore to add, "But we are not made good by goodness, or gentle by gentleness. We are only denominated good or gentle from these fruits of the Spirit;" since a believer can neither be made nor denominated so, without having goodness or gentleness in him.

Ant. — Then how dare you affirm, that a believer in Christ "is not really holy?"

Friend. — You have forgotten yourself. I affirm that he is. If you affirm so too, our dispute is at an end. For if he is really holy, then he is inwardly or inherently holy. And if you grant this, you may express it as you please. I have no leisure for strife of words.

Ant. — But why will not you cut off all occasion of such strife, by speaking as I do?

Friend. — I cannot in conscience speak in the way that you do; and that for several plain reasons: (Even setting aside that main consideration, whether the things you speak be right or wrong:)

1. Because it is a confused way of speaking; so that unless a man has both a clear apprehension, and a large measure of patience, he will hardly find out any consistent meaning in what you say.

2. Because it is an insincere way of speaking. For you seem to mean what you do not.

3. Because it is an unscriptural way of speaking: The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament speaking, frequently and expressly, both of holiness, of good works, of the law and the commandments of God, as expressly and frequently to the full, as of believing in Jesus Christ.

4. Because by experience I find, it is a dangerous way of speaking, and that, both to the speaker and to the hearers: To the speaker, as it has a

peculiar tendency to puff him up, to engender pride; to make him exalt himself, (under pretense of exalting the grace of God,) and despise others: To the hearers, as it keeps many who are before our eyes from ever awaking out of the sleep of death; as it throws others again into that fatal slumber, who were just beginning to awake; as it stops many in the midst of their Christian course, and turns others clear out of the way; yea, and plunges not a few into all the wretchedness of unclean living. In consideration of this, I the more earnestly desire, when I speak on this head in particular, to “speak as the oracles of God;” to express scriptural sense in scriptural words; in every phrase I use, to keep as close as I can to “the law and the testimony;” being convinced there are no words so fit to express the deep things of God, as those which “holy men of old spake” when “they were moved by the Spirit of God.”

LONDON, *August* 24, 1745.

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

UPON

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

1. **M**ANY large volumes have been already published on this important subject. But the very length of them makes them hard to be understood, or even purchased, by common readers. A short, plain treatise on this head is what serious men have long desired, and what is here offered to those whom God has endowed with love and meekness of wisdom.

2. By *the saints*, I understand, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches;” those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant; those to whom all or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term *saints*.

3. Can any of these fall away? By *falling away*, we mean, not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted, they may. But can they fall totally? Can any of these so fall from God as to perish everlastingly?

4. I am sensible either side of this question is attended with great difficulties; such as reason alone could never remove. Therefore, “to the law and to the testimony.” Let the living oracles decide: And if these speak for us, we neither seek nor want farther witness.

5. On this authority, I believe a saint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

I.

For thus saith the Lord: “When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.” (Ezekiel 18:24.)

That this is to be understood of eternal death appears from the twenty-sixth verse: “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them;” (here is temporal death;) “for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die.” (Here is death eternal.)

It appears farther from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Verse 4.)

If you say, “The soul here means the body,” I answer, That will die whether you sin or no.

6. Again, thus saith the Lord: “When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness,” (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional,) “and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for the iniquity that he hath committed shall he die.” (33:13.)

Again: “When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.” (Verse 18.)

Therefore, one who is holy and righteous in the judgment of God himself may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

7. “But how is this consistent with what God declared elsewhere: ‘If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, — I will visit their offenses with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. I have sworn once by my holiness, that I will not fail David.’” (Psalm 89:30-35.)

I answer, There is no manner of inconsistency between one declaration and the other. The Prophet declares the just judgment of God against every righteous man who falls from his righteousness. The Psalmist declares the old loving kindnesses which God swore unto David in his truth. “I have found,” saith he, “David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand shall hold him fast, and my arm shall strengthen him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” (Verses 20, 21, 29.) It follows: “But if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; — nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break. I will not fail David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.” (Verse 30, etc.)

May not every man see, that the covenant here spoken of relates wholly to David and his seed or children? Where then is the inconsistency between the most absolute promise made to a particular family, and that solemn account which God has here given of his way of dealing with all mankind?

Besides, the very covenant mentioned in these words is not absolute, but conditional. The condition of repentance in case of forsaking God’s law was implied, though not expressed; and so strongly implied, that, this condition failing, not being performed, God did also fail David. He did “alter the thing that had gone out of his lips,” and yet without any impeachment of his truth. He “abhorred and forsook his anointed,” (verse 38,) the seed of David, whose throne, if they had repented, should have

been “as the days of heaven.” He did “break the covenant of his servant, and cast his crown to the ground” (Verse 39.) So vainly are these words of the Psalmist brought to contradict the plain, full testimony of the Prophet!

8. Nor is there any contradiction between this testimony of God by Ezekiel, and those words which he spake by Jeremiah: “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have drawn thee.” For do these words assert, that no righteous man ever turns from his righteousness? No such thing. They do not touch the question, but simply declare God’s love to the Jewish Church. To see this in the clearest light, you need only read over the whole sentence: “At the same time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I caused him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me,” saith the Prophet, speaking in the person of Israel, “saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel.” (31:1-4.)

Suffer me here to observe, once for all, a fallacy which is constantly used by almost all writers on this point. They perpetually beg the question, by applying to particular persons assertions, or prophecies, which relate only to the Church in general; and some of them only to the Jewish Church and nation, as distinguished from all other people.

If you say, “But it was particularly revealed to me, that God had loved me with an everlasting love;” I answer, Suppose it was, (which might bear a dispute,) it proves no more, at the most, than that you in particular shall persevere; but does not affect the general question, whether others shall, or shall not.

II.

9. Secondly. One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired Apostle, “War a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.” (1 Timothy 1:18, 19.)

Observe,

(1.) These men (such as Hymeneus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; which they once had, or they could not have “put it away.”

(2.) They “made shipwreck” of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.

And the Apostle himself, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, mentions one of these two as irrecoverably lost. “Alexander,” says he, “did me much evil: The Lord shall reward him according to his works.” (2 Timothy 4:14.) Therefore one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

10. “But how can this be reconciled with the words of our Lord, ‘He that believeth shall be saved?’”

Do you think these words mean, “he that believes” at this moment “shall” certainly and inevitably “be saved?”

If this interpretation be good, then, by all the rules of speech, the other part of the sentence must mean, “He” that does “not believe” at this moment, “shall” certainly and inevitably “be damned.”

Therefore that interpretation cannot be good. The plain meaning then of the whole sentence is, “He that believeth,” if he continue in faith, “shall be saved; he that believeth not,” if he continue in unbelief, “shall be damned.”

11. “But does not Christ say elsewhere,” He that believeth hath everlasting life?” (John 3:36,) and, “He that believeth on him that sent me,

hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life?” (5:24.)

I answer,

- (1.)The love of God is everlasting life. It is, in substance, the life of heaven. Now everyone that believes, loves God, and therefore “hath everlasting life.”
- (2.)Everyone that believes “is” therefore “passed from death,” spiritual death, “unto life;” and,
- (3.)“Shall not come into condemnation,” if he endureth in the faith unto the end; according to our Lord’s own words, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved;” and, “Verily I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.” (John 8:51.)

III.

12. Thirdly. Those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the Apostle: “Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Be not high-minded, but; fear: If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off.” (Romans 11:17, 20-22.)

We may observe here,

- (1.)The persons spoken to were actually grafted into the olive tree.
- (2.)This olive tree is not barely the outward visible Church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text: “If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” (Verse 16.) And, “Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.”

(3.) These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible Church, into which they were then grafted.

(4.) Here is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off being ever grafted in again.

Therefore, those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

13. "But how does this agree with the 29th verse, 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance?'"

The preceding verse shows: "As touching the election" (the unconditional election of the Jewish nation) "they are beloved for the fathers' sake;" for the sake of their forefathers. It follows: (In proof of this, that "they are beloved for the fathers' sake," that God has still blessings in store for the Jewish nation:) "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" for God doth not repent of any blessings he hath given them, or any privileges he hath called them to. The words here referred to were originally spoken, with a peculiar regard to these national blessings. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." (Numbers 23:19.)

14. "But do not you hereby make God changeable? Whereas 'with Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' (James 1:17.)" By no means. God is unchangeably holy: Therefore, he always "loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity." He is unchangeably good: Therefore he pardoneth all that "repent and believe the gospel." And he is unchangeably just: Therefore, he "rewardeth every man according to his works." But all this hinders not his resisting, when they are proud, those to whom he gave grace when they were humble. Nay, his unchangeableness itself requires, that, if they grow high-minded, God should cut them off; that there should be a proportionable change in all the divine dispensations toward them.

15. "But how then is God faithful?" I answer, In fulfilling every promise which he hath made, to all to whom it is made, all who fulfill the condition of that promise. More particularly,

- (1.) "God is faithful" in that "he will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear." (1 Corinthians 10:13.)
- (2.) "The Lord is faithful, to establish and keep you from evil; (if you put your trust in him;) from all the evil which you might otherwise suffer, through "unreasonable and wicked men." (2 Thessalonians 3:2, 3.)
- (3.) "Quench not the, Spirit; hold fast that which is good; abstain from all appearance of evil; and your whole spirit, soul, and body shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thessalonians 5:19, etc.)
- (4.) Be not disobedient unto the heavenly calling; and "God is faithful, by whom ye were called, to confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 1:8, 9.) Yet, notwithstanding all this, unless you fulfill the condition, you cannot attain the promise.

"Nay, but are not 'all the promises, yea and amen?'" They are firm as the pillars of heaven. Perform the condition, and the promise is sure. Believe, and thou shalt be saved.

"But many promises are absolute and unconditional." In many, the condition is not expressed. But this does not prove, there is none implied. No promises can be expressed in a more absolute form, than those above cited from the eighty-ninth Psalm. And yet we have seen, a condition was implied even there, though none was expressed.

16. "But there is no condition, either expressed or implied, in those words of St. Paul: 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'" (Romans 8:38. 39.)

Suppose there is not, (which will bear a dispute,) yet what will this prove? Just thus much, — that the Apostle was at that time fully

persuaded of his own perseverance. And I doubt not, but many believers at this day have the very same persuasion, termed in Scripture, “The full assurance of hope.” But this does not prove that every believer shall persevere, any more than that every believer is thus fully persuaded of his perseverance.

IV.

17. Fourthly. Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches,” may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are buried.” (John 15:1-6.)

Here we may observe,

- (1.)The persons spoken of were in Christ, branches of the true vine:
- (2.)Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away:
- (3.)The branches which abide not are cast forth, cast out from Christ and his Church:
- (4.)They are not only cast forth, but withered; consequently, never grafted in again: Nay,
- (5.)They are not only cast forth and withered, but also cast into the fire: And,
- (6.)They are burned. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true vine may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

18. By this clear, indisputable declaration of our Lord, we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute; wherein it is certain, whatever he meant beside, he did not mean to contradict himself. For example: “This is the Father’s will, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.” Most sure; all that God hath given him; or, as it is

expressed in the next verse, “every one which believeth on him,” namely, to the end, he “will raise up at the last day,” to reign with him forever.

Again: “I am the living bread: — If any man eat of this bread,” (by faith,) “he shall live forever.” (John 6:51.) True; if he continue to eat thereof. And who can doubt of it?

Again: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” (John 10:27-29.)

In the preceding text the condition is only implied; in this it is plainly expressed. They are my sheep that hear my voice, that follow me in all holiness. And, “If ye do those things, ye shall never fall.” None shall “pluck you out of my hands.”

Again: “Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” (John 13:1.) “Having loved his own,” namely, the Apostles, (as the very next words, “which were in this world,” evidently show,) “he loved them until the end” of his life, and manifested that love to the last.

19. Once more “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one.” (John 17:11.)

Great stress has been laid upon this text; and it has been hence inferred, that all those whom the Father had given him (a phrase frequently occurring in this chapter) must infallibly persevere to the end.

And yet, in the very next verse, our Lord himself declares that one of those whom the Father had given him did not persevere unto the end, but perished everlastingly.

His own words are, “Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.” (John 17:12.)

So one even of these was finally lost! — a demonstration that the phrase, “those whom thou hast given me,” signifies here (if not in most other places too) the twelve Apostles, and them only.

20. On this occasion, I cannot but observe another common instance of begging the question, — of taking for granted what ought to be proved. It is usually laid down as an indisputable truth, that whatever our Lord speaks to or of his Apostles is to be applied to all believers. But this cannot be allowed by any who impartially search the Scriptures. They cannot allow, without clear and particular proof, that any one of those texts which related primarily to the Apostles (as all men grant) belong to any but them.

V.

21. Fifthly. Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the Apostle Peter, “If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” (the only possible way of escaping them,) “they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” (2 Peter 2:20, 21.)

That the knowledge of the way of righteousness, which they had attained, was an inward, experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expression, — they had “escaped the pollutions of the world;” an expression parallel to that in the preceding chapter, verse 4,: “Having escaped the corruption which is in the world.” And in both chapters, this effect is ascribed to the same cause; termed in the first, “the knowledge of Him who hath called us to glory and virtue;” in the second, more explicitly, “the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ and the way of righteousness; they fell back into the same pollutions they had escaped,

and were “again entangled therein and overcome.” They “turned from the holy commandment delivered to them,” so that their “latter end was worse than their beginning.”

Therefore, those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

22. And this is perfectly consistent with St. Peter’s words, in the first chapter of his former Epistle: “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” Undoubtedly, so are all they who ever attain eternal salvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour.

VI.

23. Sixthly. Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired writer to the Hebrews: “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, — if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” (Hebrews 6:4, 6.)

Must not every unprejudiced person see, the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting be understood of any but true believers?

They “were once enlightened;” an expression familiar with the Apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So, “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power, to us-ward that believe.” (Ephesians 1:17-19.) So again: “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts,

to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6.) This is a light which no unbelievers have. They are utter strangers to such enlightening. “The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.” (Verse 4.)

“They had tasted of the heavenly gift,” (emphatically so called,) “and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.” So St. Peter likewise couples them together: “Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;” (Acts 2:38;) whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, with all the other fruits of the Spirit. Yea, it is remarkable, that our Lord himself in his grand commission to St. Paul (to which the Apostle probably alludes in these words) comprises all these three particulars. “I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,” (here contracted into that one expression, “they were enlightened,”) “that they may receive forgiveness of sins,” (“the heavenly gift,”) “and an inheritance among them which are sanctified;” (Acts 26:18;) which are made “partakers of the Holy Ghost,” of all the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

The expression, “They tasted of the heavenly gift,” is taken from the Psalmist, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Psalm 34:8.) As if he had said, Be ye as assured of his love, as of anything you see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.

And yet those who had been thus “enlightened,” had “tasted” this “gift,” and been thus “partakers of the Holy Ghost,” so “fell away” that it was “impossible to renew them again to repentance.”

“But the Apostle only makes a supposition, ‘If they shall fall away.’”

I answer: The Apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, **Αδυνατον τοις απαξ φωτισθεντας, και παραπεσοντας;** that is, in plain English, “It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened” and have fallen away; therefore they must perish everlastingly.

24. "But if so, then farewell all my comfort."

Then your comfort depends on a poor foundation. My comfort stands not on any opinion, either that a believer can or cannot fall away, not on the remembrance of anything wrought in me yesterday; but on what is today; on my present knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling me to himself; on my now beholding the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; walking in the light as he is in the light, and having fellowship with the Father and with the Son. My comfort is, that through grace I now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that his Spirit doth bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. I take comfort in this and this only, that I see Jesus at the right hand of God; that I personally for myself, and not for another, have an hope full of immortality; that I feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart, being crucified to the world, and the world crucified to me. My rejoicing is this, the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have my conversation in the world.

Go and find, if you can, a more solid joy, a more blissful comfort, on this side heaven. But this comfort is not shaken, be that opinion true or false; whether the saints in general can or cannot fall.

If you take up with any comfort short of this, you lean on the staff of a broken reed, which not only will not bear your weight, but will enter into your hand and pierce you.

VII.

25. Seventhly. Those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the same inspired writer, "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my son shall have no pleasure in him." (Hebrews 10:38.) "The just," the justified person, "shall live by faith," even now shall he live the life which is hid with Christ in God; and if he endure unto the end, he shall live with God forever. "But if any man draw back," saith the Lord, "my soul shall have no pleasure in him;" that is, I will utterly

cast him off; and accordingly the drawing back here spoken of is termed, in the verse immediately following, “drawing back to perdition.”

“But the person supposed to draw back is not the same with him that is said to live by faith.”

I answer,

(1.) Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But,

(2.) Had the text been fairly translated, there had been no pretense for this objection. For the original runs thus: **Ο ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ ΖΗΣΕΤΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΑΝ ΥΠΟΣΕΙΛΗΤΑΙ.** If **ο δίκαιος**, “the just man that lives by faith,” (so the expression necessarily implies, there being no other nominative of the verb,) “draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

“But the Apostle adds: ‘We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.’” And what will you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before, that it manifestly confirms it. It is a farther proof that there are those “who draw back unto perdition,” although the Apostle was not of that number. Therefore those who live by faith may yet fall from God and perish everlastingly.

26. “But does not God say to everyone that lives by faith, ‘I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?’”

The whole sentence runs thus: “Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as we have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” True; provided “your conversation be without covetousness,” and ye “be content with such things as ye have.” Then you may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”

Do you not see,

(1.) That this promise, as here recited, relates wholly to temporal things?

(2.) That, even thus taken, it is not absolute, but conditional? And,

- (3.)That the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

VIII.

27. Eighthly. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall from God as to perish everlasting.

For thus again saith the Apostle, “If we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing!” (Hebrews 10:26-29.)

It is undeniably plain,

- (1.)That the person mentioned here was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant.
- (2.)That he afterwards, by known, willful sin, trod under foot the Son of God. And,
- (3.)That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

Therefore, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

28. “What! Can the blood of Christ burn in hell? Or can the purchase of the blood of Christ go thither?”

I answer,

- (1.)The blood of Christ cannot burn in hell, no more than it can be spilled on the earth. The heavens must contain both his flesh and blood until the restitution of all things. But,
- (2.)If the oracles of God are true, one who was purchased by the blood of Christ may go thither. For he that was sanctified by the blood of

Christ was purchased by the blood of Christ. But one who was sanctified by the blood of Christ may nevertheless go to hell; may fall under that fiery indignation which shall for ever devour the adversaries.

29. “Can a child of God then go to hell? Or can a man be a child of God today, and a child of the devil tomorrow? If God is our Father once, is he not our Father always?”

I answer,

- (1.) A child of God, that is, a true believer, (for he that believeth is born of God,) while he continues a true believer, cannot go to hell. But,
- (2.) If a believer make shipwreck of the faith, he is no longer a child of God. And then he may go to hell, yea, and certainly will, if he continues in unbelief.
- (3) If a believer may make shipwreck of the faith, then a man that believes now may be an unbeliever some time hence; yea, very possibly, tomorrow; but, if so, he who is a child of God today, may be a child of the devil tomorrow. For,
- (4.) God is the Father of them that believe, so long as they believe. But the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no.

30. The sum of all is this: If the Scriptures are true, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches;” those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and of the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

Therefore let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

A SUFFICIENT ANSWER
TO
“LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR OF
‘THERON AND ASPASIO.’”

IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

BRISTOL, *November 1, 1757.*

SIR,

IT is not very material who you are. If Mr. Glass is still alive, I suppose you are he. If not, you are at least one of his humble admirers, and probably not very old: So your youth may in some measure plead your excuse for such a peculiar pertness, insolence, and self-sufficiency, with such an utter contempt of all mankind, as no other writer of the present age has shown.

As you use no ceremony toward any man, so neither shall I use any toward you, but bluntly propose a few objections to your late performance, which stare a man in the face as soon as he looks in it.

I object, First, that you are a gross, willful slanderer. For,

1. You say of Mr. Hervey, “He shuts up our access to the divine righteousness, by holding forth a preliminary human one as necessary to our enjoying the benefit of it.” (Page 4.)

Again: “You set men to work to do something, in order to make their peace with God.” (Page 9.) This is an absolute slander, founded on that

poor pretense, that he supposes those who repent and believe, and none but those, to “enjoy the benefit of Christ’s righteousness.” And has he not the warrant of Christ himself for so doing, — “Repent ye, and believe the gospel?” If this is “teaching man to acquire a righteousness of his own,” the charge falls on our Lord himself.

You say, 2. “As to that strange something which you call faith, after all you have told us about it, we are at as great a loss to tell distinctly what it is, as when you began.” (*Ibid.*)

This is another slander. You are at no loss (as will presently appear) to tell what Mr. Hervey means by faith. Whether it be right or wrong, his account of it is as clear and distinct as any that ever was given.

You say, 3. “The popular Preachers” (so you term Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Lucas, Crisp, Doddridge, Watts, Gill; Mr. Guthrie, Boston, Erskine, Willison; Mr. Flavel, Marshal; Mr. Griffith Jones, Hervey, Romaine, Whitefield, Wesley) “never tell us what they mean by faith, but by some labored circumlocutions.” (Page 282.)

This is a third palpable slander, as your own words prove: “They say, Faith is a real persuasion that Christ hath died for me.” (Page 5.) Are you not here told what they mean by faith; and that without any circumlocution at all?

You confute your own slander still farther, by adding three more: 4. “They make a pious resolve the ground of our acceptance with God.” (Page 360.) No, never. Not one of the writers you have named ever did, or does so now. 5. “The faith they talk of, is only a timid resolve, joined with a fond conjecture.” Or, 6. “It is a fond presumptuous wish, greatly embarrassed with doubts and difficulties.” (Page 404.)

Slander all over. We make the righteousness and blood of Christ the only ground of our acceptance with God. And the faith we talk of is neither more nor less than a divine conviction, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.

You say, 7. "All who preach this doctrine are of the world, and speak of the world; therefore the world heareth them." (Page 14.) "Therefore they will always be attended by the body of the people." (Page 37.)

A sad mistake this, in point of fact. For whether they are of the world or no, it is certain the world, the generality of men, (good or bad,) doth not and never did hear them. At this day those who hear them are an exceeding small number, in comparison of those who do not. And if the body of the people in any place do attend some of them, how do they attend? Just as they would a mad dog; with sticks and stones, and whatever comes to hand.

And this you yourself account for extremely well. *Sed oportet Palaemonem esse memorem.*³⁴ "What a figure would a small number of Ministers make in the Church either of England or Scotland, who should agree to maintain the plain, obvious sense of their own public standards of doctrine; and insist upon an adherence to that sense, as a term of holding communion with them in the sacred institutions! Their situation in the national Church would be very uncomfortable, as well as extremely ridiculous. For many enemies would soon be awakened against them, to distress and misrepresent them in various respects." (Page 465.)

Thus much as a specimen of your veracity. I object, Secondly, that you know not what faith is. You talk about it, and about it, and labor and sweat, and at last come to a most lame and impotent conclusion.

You say, "That; Christ died for me, is a point not easily settled, a point which the Scripture nowhere ascertains;" (The very thought, and nearly the words, of Cardinal Bellarmine, in his dispute with our forefathers:) "So far from it, that it affirms the final perdition of many who have great confidence of their interest in Christ;" (this only proves, that many fancy they have what they have not; which I suppose nobody will deny;) "yea, and declares, that 'wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction.'" (Page 14.) It is so; but this is nothing to the point — the nature of true faith.

“Nature, these men say, begins the work;” (I know none of them who say so;) “and then grace helps out the efforts of nature, and persuades a man, though he be not mentioned in Scripture, either by name or surname, that Christ died for him.” (Page 33.) “So the Spirit whispers something to the heart of a sinner, beside what he publicly speaks in the Scriptures. But will any lover of the Scriptures allow the possibility of this, — that the Spirit should ever speak a syllable to any man, beside what he publicly speaks there?” (Page 35.) You will presently allow something wonderfully like it. And you suppose yourself to be a “lover of the Scriptures.”

“Some of the Martyrs were assured of being the friends of Christ.” (Page 398) How? Which way? Neither their name nor surname was mentioned in Scripture! Why, “the Holy Ghost assured their hearts and the hearts of the first Christians, that their joy was not the joy of the hypocrite, but the beginning of eternal life. Thus their joy was made full, and their love perfected by the highest enjoyments it was here capable of. Every believer finds a refreshment to his mind, far superior to all the comforts of this life. They stand in God’s presence, and have their joy made full in beholding the light of his countenance.” (Page 402.)

Allow this, and we will never dispute, whether the Spirit does or does not “whisper anything to their hearts.” It is enough, that they have “the Spirit of adoption, crying in their hearts, Abba, Father;” and that this “Spirit witnesseth with their spirits that they are the children of God.”

“The chief time of this agency of the Spirit is, while the Preachers are declaiming. And the people are in continual expectation of the season of power in hearing them.” (Page 38.)

Yea, and reason good, if, as you affirm, “hearing is the only mean whereby God gives faith.” (Page 391.) But we do not affirm so much. We only maintain, that “faith” generally “cometh by hearing.”

But you go on: “They who partake of Christ’s joy, receive the highest evidence that he is the Christ. Thus then faith is greatly confirmed by a kind of presence of its object. Their love is joyfully inflamed, and they

obtain the assurance of hope, by having in themselves an experimental foretaste of their eternal enjoyment.” (Page 415.)

Why, then, what are we disputing about, seeing you are not so kind as to allow, not only the possibility, but the real existence, of all that we contend for?

“O, but this is not faith. Faith is quite another thing.” What is it? Let us hear your account of it.

“The essence of true faith is the eternal God.” (Page 288.)

“What is faith? It is the blood of Christ.” (Page 330.)

Stark, staring nonsense! Sir, you can talk sense, if you please. Why should you palm upon your readers such stuff as this?

Very little better than this is your third definition: “The truth which a man believes is his faith.” (Page 301.) No, it is not; no more than the light which a man sees is his sight. You must therefore guess again. “To believe this fact, Christ rose from the dead, is faith.” (Page 169.) “Ask a man, Is the gospel true or not? If he holds it to be true, this is faith.” (Page 296.) But is this saving faith? “Yes. Every one that believes the gospel history shall be saved.” (Page 333.)

This is flat and plain. And, if it is but true, every devil in hell will be saved. For it is absolutely certain, every one of these believes this fact, — Christ rose from the dead. It is certain, everyone of these believes the Gospel history. Therefore this is not saving faith: Neither will every one be saved who believes this fact, — Christ rose from the dead. It follows, that, whatever others do, you know not what faith is.

I object, Thirdly,

1. That you yourself “shut up our access to the divine righteousness.”
2. That you vehemently contradict yourself, and do the very thing which you charge upon others.

1. You yourself shut up our access to the divine righteousness by destroying that repentance which Christ has made the way to it. "Ask men," you say, "have they sinned or not? If they know they have, this is conviction. And this is a preparation enough for mercy." Soft casuistry indeed! He that receives this saying, is never likely either to "repent" or "believe the gospel." And if he do not, he can have no access to the righteousness of Christ.

Yet you strangely affirm, "A careless sinner is in full as hopeful a way as one that is the most deeply convicted." (Page 292.) How can this be, if that conviction be from God? Where He has begun the work, will He not finish it? Have we not reason to hope this? But in a careless sinner that work is not begun; perhaps, never will be.

Again: Whereas our Lord gives a general command, "Seek, and ye shall find;" you say, "Saving faith was never yet sought, or in the remotest manner wished for, by an unbeliever:" (Page 372:.) A proposition as contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture, as to the experience of every true believer. Everyone who now believes, knows how he sought and wished for that faith, before he experienced it. It is not true even with regard to your faith, a belief of the Bible. For I know Deists at this day, who have often wished they could believe the Bible, and owned, "it was happy for them that could."

2. You vehemently contradict yourself, and do the very thing which you charge upon others.

"If we imagine we possess or desire to attain any requisite to our acceptance with God, beside or in connection with the bare work of Christ, Christ shall profit us nothing." (Page 96.)

Again: "What is required of us in order to our acceptance with God? Nothing. The least attempt to do anything is damnably criminal."

Very good. Now for self-consistency: "What Christ has done is that which quiets the conscience of man as soon as he knows it. So that he need ask no more than, 'Is it true or not?' If he finds it true, he is happy. If he does

not, he can reap no comfort from it. Our comfort arises from the persuasion of this.” (Page 12.)

Again: “Men are justified by a knowledge of the righteousness of Christ.” (Page 406.) And yet again:

“The sole requisite to acceptance is, divine righteousness brought to view.” (Page 291.)

So you have brought matters to a fine conclusion; confuting an hundred of your own assertions, and doing, the very thing for which you have been all along so unmercifully condemning others. You yourself here teach another “requisite to our acceptance, beside the bare work of Christ,” viz., the knowing that work, the finding it true. Therefore, by your own word, “Christ shall profit you nothing.” In one page you say, “Nothing is required in order to our acceptance with God;” in another, “Divine righteousness brought to view is requisite to our acceptance.” *Brought to view!* What self-righteousness is this? Which of “the popular Preachers” could have done worse? “Men are justified by a knowledge of the righteousness of Christ.” *Knowledge!* What! our own knowledge! Knowledge in us! Why, this is the very thing which we call faith. So you have fairly given up the whole question, justified your opponents, and condemned yourself as “damnably criminal!”

I object, Fourthly, that you have no charity, and that you know not what charity is. That you know not what it is, manifestly appears from the wonderful definition you give of it. “Charity,” you say, “is fellowship with God in his blessedness.” (Page 453.) Muddy, confused, *ut nihil supra!* ³⁵ We know, he that loveth hath fellowship with God. But yet the ideas of one and of the other are widely different. We know, “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” But yet loving him is not the same thing with dwelling in him. If it were, the whole sentence would be flat tautology.

You say, 2. Charity is “the love of the truth.” (Page 456.) Not at all: No more than it is the love of the sun. It is the love of God, and of man for God’s sake: No more and no less.

You say, 3. "Christ is known to us only by report." That is not granted. "And charity is the love of that report." (Page 455.) Every intelligent reader will want no farther proof, that; you know not what charity is.

No wonder then that you have it not; nay, that you are at the utmost distance, both from the love of God and of your neighbor. You cannot love God, because you do not love your neighbor. For he that loves God, loves his brother also. But such hatred, malevolence, rancor, bitterness, as you show to all who do not exactly fall in with your opinion, was scarce ever seen in a Jew, an Heathen, or a Popish inquisitor.

"Nay, but you abhor persecution. You would persecute no man." I should be very loath to trust you. I doubt, were it in your power, you would make more bonfires in Smithfield than Bonner and Gardiner put together. But if not, if you would not persecute with fire and faggot,

Mirum!

*Ut neque calce lupus quenquam, neque dente petit bos:*³⁶

What does this prove? Only that you murder in another way.

You smite with the tongue; with the poison of asps, which is under your lips.

A few specimens follow: —

"The popular Preachers worship another God." (Page 338.) "It can never be allowed that Dr. Doddridge worshipped the same God with Paul." (Page 470.) "Notice the difference betwixt; the God of these Preachers, and the true God; betwixt their Christ, and the Christ preached by the Apostles; betwixt their spirit, and the Spirit that influenced the Apostles." (Page 40.)

"I know no sinners more hardened, none greater destroyers of mankind, than they." (Page 98.) "By no small energy of deceit, they darken the

revelation of God, and change the doctrine of the blessed God into a doctrine of self-dependence." Strange, that you yourself should do the very same thing! averring, that "men are justified by a knowledge of the righteousness of Christ," not by the bare work which Christ has wrought! You put me in mind of an old usurer, who vehemently thanked a Minister that had preached a severe sermon against usury; and being asked, "Why do you talk thus?" replied, "I wish there were no usurer in London beside myself!" Sir, do not you wish there was no Minister in Great Britain who taught this doctrine, beside yourself?

"That any who has learnt his religion from the New Testament, should mistake their doctrine for the Christian, is astonishing." (Page 40.) Theirs, or yours? for it happens to be one and the same with regard to the present point. "By many deceits they change the truth of God into a lie." (*Ibid.*) If they do, so do you. Indeed you heavily complain of the imputation. You say, "It is both astonishing and provoking, that, after all, men will say, there is no difference between their scheme and yours." And yet, after all, so it is: Truth is great, and will prevail. In the leading point, that of justification, both you and they teach, "Men are justified by a knowledge of the righteousness of Christ." Only they think, it is a divine, supernatural, experimental knowledge, wrought in the inmost soul; and you think, it is a bare historical knowledge, of the same kind with that which the devils have.

One specimen more of your unparalleled charity, which in any but yourself would be astonishing: "If any one chooses to go to hell by a devout path, let him study any one of those four famous treatises: Mr. Guthrie's 'Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ;' Mr. Marshal's 'Gospel Mystery of Sanctification;' Mr. Boston's 'Human Nature in its Fourfold State;' or Dr. Doddridge's 'Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.' If any profane person, who desires to be converted, enter into the spirit of those books, he thereby becomes twofold more a child of hell than he was before." (Page 436.)

Such is the doctrine, such is the spirit, of Palaemon! condemning the whole generation of God's children; sending all his opponents to hell at once; casting arrows, firebrands, death on every side! But I stop. God be

merciful to thee a sinner; and show thee compassion, though thou hast none for thy fellow-servants! Otherwise it will be more tolerable, I will not say for Seneca or Epictetus, but for Nero or Domitian, in the day of judgment, than for thee!

A LETTER

TO

A GENTLEMAN AT BRISTOL.

BRISTOL, *January 6, 1758.*

SIR,

YOU desire my thoughts on a paper lately addressed to the inhabitants of St. Stephen's parish, and an answer thereto, entitled, "A Seasonable Antidote against Popery." I have at present little leisure, and cannot speak so fully as the importance of the subject requires. I can only just tell you wherein I do or do not agree with what is advanced in the one or the other.

I agree with the main of what is asserted in that paper, allowing for some expressions which I could wish had been altered, because some of them are a little obscure, others liable to misinterpretation; indeed, so liable, that they could scarce fail to be misunderstood by the unwary, and censured by the unfriendly, reader.

But I cannot agree, that "obedience is a condition of, or antecedent to, justification," unless we mean final justification. This I apprehend to be a considerable mistake; although, indeed, it is not explicitly asserted, but only implied in some parts of that address.

I entirely agree with the author of the "Seasonable Antidote," in the important points that follow: —

“That a sinner is justified or accounted righteous before God, only through the righteousness” (or merits) “of Jesus Christ, that the end of his living and dying for us was, that our persons first, and then our works, might be accepted; that faith is the hand which apprehends, the instrument which applies, the merits of Christ for our justification; that justifying faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit; that He evidences our being justified, by bearing his testimony with our spirits, that we are the children of God, and by enabling us to bring forth, first the inward, and then the outward, fruits of the Spirit; and, lastly, that these fruits do not justify us, do not procure our justification, but prove us to be justified; as the fruits on a tree do not make it alive, but prove it to be alive.” (Pages 33, 34.)

These undoubtedly are the genuine principles of the Church of England. And they are confirmed, as by our Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, so by the whole tenor of Scripture. Therefore, till heaven and earth pass away, these truths will not pass away.

But I do not agree with the author of that tract, in the spirit of the whole performance. It does not seem to breathe either that modesty, or seriousness, or charity, which one would desire. One would not desire to hear any private person, of no great note in the Church or the world, speak, as it were, *ex cathedra*, with an air of infallibility, or at least of vast self-sufficiency, on a point wherein men of eminence, both for piety, learning, and office, have been so greatly divided. Though my judgment is nothing altered, yet I often condemn myself for my past manner of speaking on this head. Again: I do not rejoice at observing any thing light or ludicrous in an answer to so serious a paper; and much less in finding any man branded as a Papist, because his doctrine in one particular instance resembles (for that is the utmost which can be proved) a doctrine of the Church of Rome. I can in no wise reconcile this to the grand rule of charity, — Doing to others as we would they should do to us.

Indeed, it is said, “Dr. T. openly defends the fundamental doctrine of Popery, justification by works.” (Page 3.) Therefore, “he must be a Papist.” (Page 4.) But here is a double mistake: For,

1. Whatever may be implied in some of his expressions, it is most certain Dr. T. does not openly defend justification by works.

2. This itself, justification by works, is not the fundamental doctrine of Popery, but the universality of the Romish Church, and the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. And to call anyone a Papist who denies these, is neither charity nor justice.

I do not agree with the author in what follows: Dr. T. “loses sight of the truth, when he talks of Christ’s having obtained for us a covenant of better hopes; and that faith and repentance are the terms of this covenant. They are not. They are the free gifts of the covenant of grace, not the terms or conditions. To say, ‘Privileges of the covenant or the terms or conditions of it,’ is downright Popery.”

This is downright calling names, and no better. But it falls on a greater than Dr. T. St. Paul affirms, Jesus Christ is the Mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises; yea, and that better covenant he hath obtained for us, by his own blood. And if any desire to receive the privileges which are freely given according to the tenor of this covenant, Jesus Christ himself has marked out the way, — “Repent, and believe the gospel.” These, therefore, are the terms of the covenant, unless the author of it was mistaken. These are the conditions of it; unless a man can enter into the kingdom, without either repenting or believing. For the word *condition* means neither more nor less than something *sine qua non*; without which something else is not done. Now, this is the exact truth with regard to repenting and believing; without which God does not work in us “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

It is true, repentance and faith are privileges and free gifts. But this does not hinder their being conditions too. And neither Mr. Calvin himself, nor any of our Reformers, made any scruple of calling them so.

“But the gospel is a revelation of grace and mercy, not a proposal of a covenant of terms and conditions.” (Page 5.) It is both. It is a revelation of grace and mercy, to all that “repent and believe.” And this the author himself owns in the following page: “The free grace of God applies to sinners the benefits of Christ’s atonement and righteousness, by working in them repentance and faith.” (Page 6.) Then they are not applied without

repentance and faith; that is, in plain terms, these are the conditions of that application.

I read in the next page: "In the gospel we have the free promises of eternal life, but not annexed to faith and repentance, as works of man," (true; they are the gift of God,) "or the terms or conditions of the covenant." Yes, certainly; they are no less terms or conditions, although God works them in us.

"But what is promised us as a free gift, cannot be received upon the performance of any terms or conditions." Indeed it can. Our Lord said to the man born blind, "Go and wash in the pool of Siloam." Here was a plain condition to be performed; something without which he would not have received his sight. And yet his sight was a gift altogether as free, as if the pool had never been mentioned.

"But if repentance and faith are the free gifts of God, can they be the terms or conditions of our justification?" (Page 9.) Yes: Why not? They are still something without which no man is or can be justified.

"Can then God give that freely, which he does not give but upon certain terms and conditions?" (*Ibid.*) Doubtless he can; as one may freely give you a sum of money, on condition you stretch out your hand to receive it. It is therefore no "contradiction to say, We are justified freely by grace, and yet upon certain terms or conditions." (Page 10.)

I cannot therefore agree, that "we are accepted without any terms previously performed to qualify us for acceptance." For we are not accepted, nor are we qualified for, or capable of, acceptance, without repentance and faith.

"But a man is not justified by works, but by the faith of Christ. This excludes all qualifications." (Page 13.) Surely it does not exclude the qualification of faith!

"But St. Paul asserts, 'To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.'"

True: “To him that worketh not.” But does God justify him that “believeth not?” Otherwise, this text proves just the contrary to what it is brought to prove.

But “our Church excludes repentance and faith from deserving any part of our justification. Why then do you insist upon them as qualifications requisite to our justification?” (Page 19.)

Because Christ and his Apostles do so. Yet we all agree, they do not deserve any part of our justification. They are no part of the meritorious cause; but they are the conditions of it. This and no other is “the doctrine of Scripture, and of the Church of England!” Both the Scripture and “our Church allow, yea, insist on these qualifications or conditions.” (Page 21.)

“But if repentance and faith would not be valid and acceptable without the righteousness of Christ, then they cannot be necessary qualifications for our justification.” (Page 22.) I cannot allow the consequence. They are not acceptable without the righteousness or merits of Christ; and yet he himself has made them necessary qualifications for our justification through his merits.

But the grand objection of this gentleman lies against the Doctor’s next paragraph; the sum of which is: “The merits of Christ were never intended to supersede the necessity of repentance and obedience,” (I would say, repentance and faith,) “but to make them acceptable in the sight of God, and to purchase for them” (I would add, that obey Him) “a reward of immortal happiness.”

I am not afraid to undertake the defense of this paragraph, with this small variation, against Mr. Chapman, Mr. Nyberg, Count Zinzendorf, or any other person whatever; provided only that he will set his name to his work; for I do not love fighting in the dark.

And I, as well as Dr. T., affirm, that “to say more than this concerning Christ’s imputed merits,” to say more than, that “they have purchased for us grace to repent and believe, acceptance upon our believing, power to

obey, and eternal salvation to them that do obey him;” — to say more than this is blasphemous Antinomianism,” such as Mr. Calvin would have abhorred; and does “open a door to all manner of sin and wickedness.”

“I must likewise affirm, that to talk of imputed righteousness in the manner many do at this day, is making the imaginary transfer of Christ’s righteousness serve as a cover for the unrighteousness of mankind.” (Page 26.) Does not Mr. Ch——p——n do this at Bristol? Does not Mr. M——rd——n, at London? Let them shudder then, let their blood run cold, who do it; not theirs who tell them that they do so. It is not the latter, but the former, who “trample Christ’s righteousness under foot as a mean and vile thing.”

I firmly believe, “We are accounted righteous before God, justified *only* for the merit of Christ.” But let us have no shifting the terms: “*Only* through Christ’s imputed righteousness,” are not the words of the Article, neither the language of our Church. Much less does our Church anywhere affirm, “that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the ungodly, who have no qualifications;” (page 28;) no repentance, no faith; nor do the Scriptures ever affirm this.

The reflection on the general inference, I so entirely agree with, as to think it worth transcribing: “If you have faith and repentance, you want no other signs or evidences of your justification. But if you have not these, to pretend to any other assurances, tokens, feelings, or experiences, is vain and delusive.” Does he know any one who maintains, that a man may be in a state of justification, and yet have no faith or repentance? But the marks and evidences of true faith which the Scripture has promised, must not be discarded as vain or delusive. The Scripture has promised us the assurance of faith, to be wrought in us by the operation of God. It mentions “the earnest of the Spirit,” and speaks of “feeling after the Lord,” and finding him; and so our Church, in her Seventeenth Article, speaks of “feeling in ourselves the working of the Spirit of Christ;” and, in the Homily for Rogation Week, of “feeling our conscience at peace with God, through remission of our sin.” So that we must not reject all “assurances, tokens, feelings, and experiences,” as “vain and delusive.”

Nor do I apprehend Dr. T. ever intended to say, that we must reject all inward feelings, but only those which are without faith or repentance. And who would not reject these? His very words are, "If you have not these, to pretend to any other feelings is vain and delusive." I say so too. Meantime, he is undoubtedly sensible, that there is a "consolation in love;" a "peace that passeth all understanding," and a "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." Nor can we imagine him to deny, that these must be felt, inwardly felt, wherever they exist.

Upon the whole, I cannot but observe, how extremely difficult it is, even for men who have an upright intention, and are not wanting either in natural or acquired abilities, to understand one another: And how hard it is to do even justice to those whom we do not thoroughly understand; much more to treat them with that gentleness, tenderness, and brotherly kindness, with which, upon a change of circumstances, we might reasonably desire to be treated ourselves. O when shall men know whose disciples we are, by our "loving one another, as He hath loved us!" The God of love hasten the time!

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

1. A TRACT has lately been published in my name, concerning the imputed righteousness of Christ. This calls me to explain myself upon that head; which I will do with all the clearness I can. But I quarrel with no man for thinking or speaking otherwise than I do: I blame none for using those expressions which he believes to be scriptural. If he quarrels with me for not using them, at least not so frequently as himself, I can only pity him, and wish him more of “the mind which was in Christ.”

2. “The righteousness of Christ” is an expression which I do not find in the Bible. “The righteousness of God” is an expression which I do find there. I believe this means, First, the mercy of God; as 2 Peter 1:1: “Them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God.” How does it appear that “the righteousness of God” here, means either more or less than his mercy? “My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation;” thy mercy in delivering me. “I will make mention of thy righteousness only. Thy righteousness, O God, is very high.” (Psalm 71:15, etc.) Here the “righteousness of God” is expressly mentioned; but I will not take upon me to say, that it means the righteousness or mercy of the Son, any more than of the Holy Ghost.

3. I believe this expression means, Secondly, God’s method of justifying sinners. So Romans 1:17: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for therein is the righteousness of God,” his way of justifying sinners, “revealed.” “Now the righteousness of God is manifested; even the

righteousness of God which is by faith;" (unless righteousness here also means mercy;) "Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of the sins that are past; that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (3:21, etc.) "They being ignorant of God's righteousness," (method of justifying sinners,) "and going about to establish their own righteousness," (a method of their own opposite to his,) "have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (10:3.)

4. Perhaps it has a peculiar meaning in 2 Corinthians 5:21: "He made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in" (or through) "him;" that we might be justified and sanctified, might receive the whole blessing of God, through him.

5. And is not this the natural meaning of Philippians 3:8, 9: "That I may win Christ, and be found in him," grafted into the true vine, "not having my own righteousness," — the method of justification which is so long chose for myself, "which is of the law; but the righteousness which is of God" — the method of justification which God hath chosen — "by faith?"

6. "But is not Christ termed 'our righteousness?'" He is: "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:6.) And is not the plain, indisputable meaning of this scripture, He shall be what he is called, the sole Purchaser, the sole meritorious Cause, both of our justification and sanctification?

7. Nearly related to this is the following text: "Jesus Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Corinthians 1:30.) And what does this prove, but that he is made unto us righteousness, or justification, just as he is made unto us sanctification? In what sense? He is the sole Author of one, as well as of the other, the Author of our whole salvation.

8. There seems to be something more implied in Romans 10:3. Does it not imply thus much? "Christ is the end of the law" — not only of the Mosaic dispensation, but of the law of works, which was given to Adam

in his original perfection — “for righteousness to everyone that believeth;” to the end that “everyone who believeth” in him, though he have not kept, and cannot keep, that law, may be both accounted and made righteous.

9. Accordingly, frequent mention is made, in Scripture, of “faith counted for righteousness.” So Genesis 15:6: “He” (Abraham) “believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness:” A text repeated, with but little variation, over and over in the New Testament: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Romans 4:5.) Thus it was that “Noah became heir of the righteousness,” the justification, “which is by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7.) Thus also “the Gentiles,” when the Jews fell short, “attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith.” (Romans 9:30.) But that expression, “the righteousness of Christ,” does not occur in any of these texts.

10. It seems, righteousness in the following texts means neither more nor less than justification: “If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” (Galatians 2:21.) “If there had been a law which could have given life,” spiritual life, or a title to life eternal, “then righteousness should have been by the law;” (3:21;) though some may think it here includes sanctification also; which it appears to do, Revelations 19:8: “The fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”

11. “But when St. Paul says, (Romans 5:18,) ‘By the righteousness of one,’ (called in the following verse, ‘the obedience of one,’ even his ‘obedience unto death,’ his dying for us,) ‘the free gift came,’ does he not mean the righteousness of Christ?” Undoubtedly he does. But this is not the question. We are not inquiring what he means, but what he says. We are all agreed as to the meaning, but not as to the expression, “the imputing the righteousness of Christ;” which I still say, I dare not insist upon, neither require any one to use, because I cannot find it in the Bible. If anyone can, he has better eyes than me; and I wish he would show me where it is.

12. Now, if by “the righteousness of Christ” we mean anything which the Scripture does not mean, it is certain we put darkness for light. If we mean

the same which the Scripture means by different expressions, why do we prefer this expression to the scriptural? Is not this correcting the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and opposing our own to the perfect knowledge of God?

13. I am myself the more sparing in the use of it, because it has been so frequently and so dreadfully abused; and because the Antinomians use it at this day to justify the grossest abominations. And it is great pity that those who love, who preach, and follow after, holiness, should, under the notion of honoring Christ, give any countenance to those who continually make him “the minister of sin,” and so build on his righteousness as to live in such ungodliness and unrighteousness as is scarce named even among the Heathens.

14. And doth not this way of speaking naturally tend to make Christ the minister of sin? For if the very personal obedience of Christ (as those expressions directly lead me to think) be mine the moment I believe, can anything be added thereto? Does my obeying God add any value to the perfect obedience of Christ? On this scheme, then, are not the holy and unholy on the very same footing?

15. Upon the whole, I cannot express my thoughts better than in the words of that good man, Mr. Hervey: “If people may be safe and their inheritance secure without any knowledge of these particularities, why should you offer to puzzle their heads with a few unnecessary terms? We are not very solicitous as to the credit or the use of any particular set of phrases. Only let men be humbled as repenting criminals at the Redeemer’s feet; let them rely as devoted pensioners on his precious merits; and they are undoubtedly in the way to a blissful immortality.” (*Dialogues*, vol. i., p. 43. Dublin edition.)

DUBLIN, *April 5*, 1762.

PREFACE

TO

A TREATISE ON JUSTIFICATION,

EXTRACTED FROM MR. JOHN GOODWIN.

WHEREIN ALL THAT IS PERSONAL, IN LETTERS JUST
PUBLISHED, UNDER THE NAME OF THE REV. MR. HERVEY, IS
ANSWERED.

1. **P**ERHAPS I should not have submitted, at least not so soon, to the importunity of my friends, who have long been soliciting me to abridge and publish the ensuing treatise, had not some warm people published a tract, entitled, “The Scripture Doctrine of Imputed Righteousness Defended.” I then judged it absolutely incumbent upon me to publish the real Scripture doctrine. And this I believed I could not either draw up or defend better than I found it done to my hands by one who, at the time he wrote this book, was a firm and zealous Calvinist. This enabled him to confirm what he advanced by such authorities, as well from Calvin himself, as from his most eminent followers, as I could not have done, nor any who had not been long and critically versed in their writings.

2. A greater difficulty was, to know what notice I ought to take of Mr. Hervey’s treatise, wrote, as the Leeds publisher says, with a “becoming and well-tempered tartness.” The case was peculiar. My acquaintance with Mr. Hervey commenced about thirty years ago, when I was a Fellow, and he was a Commoner, of Lincoln College in Oxford. At my request he was permitted, as was Mr. Whitefield some time after, to make one of a little company who used to spend the evenings together, in reading the

Holy Scriptures. And I rejoiced in having many opportunities of assisting him both in his studies and in his Christian warfare; which he acknowledged in very strong terms, by a letter now in my hands, wrote not long after the publication of his “Meditations among the Tombs.” In my answer to this, I told him frankly, there were one or two passages in that book, which, if I had seen before it was printed, I should have advised him not to insert. He replied, if he printed anything more, he would beg of me to correct it first. Accordingly, he sent me, not long after, the manuscript of his three first Dialogues. I sent them back after some days, with a few inconsiderable corrections; but upon his complaining, “You are not my friend, if you do not take more liberty with me,” I promised I would; so he sent them again, and I made some more important alterations. I was not surprised at seeing no more of the copy, till I saw it in print. When I had read it, I wrote him my thoughts freely, but received no answer. On October 15, 1756, I sent him a second letter, which I here insert, that every impartial person may understand the real merits of the cause. I need only premise, that, at the time I wrote, I had not the least thought of making it public. I only spoke my private thoughts in a free, open manner, to a friend dear as a brother, — I had almost said to a pupil, — to a son; for so near I still accounted him. It is no wonder therefore, that “several of my objections,” as Mr. Hervey himself observes, “appear more like notes and memorandums, than a just plea to the public.” (Page 80.) It is true. They appear like what they are, like what they were originally intended for. I had no thought of a *plea to the public* when I wrote, but of “notes and memorandums to a private man.”

DEAR SIR,

October 15, 1756.

A CONSIDERABLE time since, I sent you a few hasty thoughts which occurred to me on reading the “Dialogues between Theron and Aspasio.” I have not been favored with any answer. Yet upon another and a more careful perusal of them, I could not but set down some obvious reflections, which I would rather have communicated before these Dialogues were published.

In the First Dialogue there are several just and strong observations, which way be of use to every serious reader. In the Second, is not the description

often too labored? the language too stiff and afflicted? Yet the reflections on the creation, in the thirty-first and following pages, make abundant amends for this. (I cite the pages according to the Dublin edition, having wrote the rough draught of what follows in Ireland.)

Is justification more or less than God's pardoning and accepting a sinner through the merits of Christ? That God herein "reckons the righteousness and obedience which Christ performed as our own," (page 39,) I allow; if by that ambiguous expression you mean only, as you here explain it yourself, "They are as effectual for obtaining our salvation, as if they were our own personal qualifications." (Page 41.)

"We are not solicitous as to any particular set of phrases. Only let men be humbled, as repenting criminals at Christ's feet, let them rely as devoted pensioners on his merits, and they are undoubtedly in the way to a blissful immortality." (Page 43.) Then, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of the immortal souls which he has purchased with his blood, do not dispute for that *particular phrase*, "the imputed righteousness of Christ." It is not scriptural; it is not necessary. Men who scruple to use, men who never heard, the expression, may yet "be humbled, as repenting criminals at his feet, and rely as devoted pensioners on his merits." But it has done immense hurt. I have had abundant proof, that the frequent use of this unnecessary phrase, instead of "furthering men's progress in vital holiness," has made them satisfied without any holiness at all; yea, and encouraged them to work all uncleanness with greediness.

"To ascribe pardon to Christ's passive, eternal life to his active, righteousness, is fanciful rather than judicious. His universal obedience from his birth to his death is the one foundation of my hope." (Page 45.)

This is unquestionably right. But if it be, there is no manner of need to make the imputation of his active righteousness a separate and labored head of discourse. O that you had been content with this plain scriptural account, and spared some of the dialogues and letters that follow!

The Third and Fourth Dialogues contain an admirable illustration and confirmation of the great doctrine of Christ's satisfaction. Yet even here I observe a few passages which are liable to some exception: —

“Satisfaction was made to the divine law.” (Page 54.) I do not remember any such expression in Scripture. This way of speaking of the law, as a person injured and to be satisfied, seems hardly defensible.

“The death of Christ procured the pardon and acceptance of believers, even before he came in the flesh.” (Page 74.) Yea, and ever since. In this we all agree. And why should we contend for anything more?

“All the benefits of the new covenant are the purchase of his blood.” (Page 120.) Surely they are. And after this has been fully proved, where is the need, where is the use, of contending so strenuously for the imputation of his righteousness, as is done in the Fifth and Sixth Dialogues?

“If he was our substitute as to penal sufferings, why not as to justifying obedience?” (Page 135.)

The former is expressly asserted in Scripture. The latter is not expressly asserted there.

“As sin and misery have abounded through the first Adam, mercy and grace have much more abounded through the Second. So that none can have any reason to complain.” (Page 145.) No, not if the second Adam died for all. Otherwise, all for whom he did not die have great reason to complain. For they inevitably fall by the first Adam, without any help from the Second.

“The whole world of believers” (page 148) is an expression which never occurs in Scripture, nor has it any countenance there: The world, in the inspired writings, being constantly taken either in the universal or in a bad sense; either for the whole of mankind, or for that part of them who know not God.

“In the Lord shall all the house of Israel be justified.” (Page 149.) It ought unquestionably to be rendered, “*By or through* the Lord:” This argument therefore proves nothing. “Ye are complete in him.” The words literally rendered are, “Ye are filled with him.” And the whole passage, as any unprejudiced reader may observe, relates to sanctification, not justification.

“They are accepted for Christ’s sake; this is justification through imputed righteousness.” (Page 150.) That remains to be proved. Many allow the former, who cannot allow the latter.

“The righteousness which justifies us is already wrought out.” (Page 151.) — A crude, unscriptural expression! “It was set on foot, carried on, completed.” — O vain philosophy! The plain truth is, Christ lived and “tasted death for every man.” And through the merits of his life and death, every believer is justified.

“Whoever perverts so glorious a doctrine shows he never believed.” (Page 152.) Not so. They who “turn back as a dog to the vomit” had once “escaped the pollutions of the world by the knowledge of Christ.”

“The goodness of God leadeth to repentance.” (Page 153.) This is unquestionably true. But the nice, metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness leads not to repentance, but to licentiousness.

“The believer cannot but add to his faith works of righteousness.” (Page 154.) During his first love, this is often true. But it is not true afterwards, as we know and feel by melancholy experience.

“We no longer obey in order to lay the foundation of our final acceptance.” (Page 155.) No: That foundation is already laid in the merits of Christ. Yet we obey in order to our final acceptance through his merits. And in this sense, by obeying, we “lay a good foundation, that we may attain eternal life.”

“‘We establish the law:’ We provide for its honor, by the perfect obedience of Christ.” (Page 156.) Can you possibly think St. Paul meant

this? that such a thought ever entered in to his mind? The plain meaning is, We establish both the true sense and the effectual practice of it: We provide for its being both understood and practiced in its full extent.

“On those who reject the atonement, just severity.” (Page 157.) Was it ever possible for them not to reject it? If not, how is it just to cast them into a lake of fire for not doing what it was impossible they should do? Would it be just (make it your own case) to cast *you* into hell for not touching heaven with your hand?

“Justification is complete the first moment we believe, and is incapable of augmentation.” (Page 159.) Not so: There may be as many degrees in the favor as in the image of God.

“St. Paul often mentions *a righteousness imputed*.” Not *a righteousness*, never once; but simply, *righteousness*. “What can this be, but the righteousness of Christ?” (Page 190.) He tells you himself, “To him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, faith is imputed for righteousness.” (Romans 4:5.) “Why is Christ styled *Jehovah our Righteousness*?” Because we are both justified and sanctified through Him.

“My death, the cause of their forgiveness; my righteousness, the ground of their acceptance.” (Page 191.)

How does this agree with page 45? — “To ascribe pardon to Christ’s passive, eternal life to his active, righteousness, is fanciful rather than judicious.”

“He commends such kinds of beneficence only, as were exercised to a disciple as such.” (Page 195.) Is not this a slip of the pen? Will not our Lord then commend, and reward eternally, all kinds of beneficence, provided they flowed from a principle of loving faith? yea, that which was exercised to a Samaritan, a Jew, a Turk, or a Heathen? Even these I would not term “transient bubbles,” though they do not procure our justification.

“How must our righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees? Not only in being sincere, but in possessing a complete righteousness, even that of Christ.” (Page 197.) Did our Lord mean this? Nothing less. He specifies, in the following parts of his Sermon, the very instances wherein the righteousness of a Christian exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees.

“He brings this specious hypocrite to the test.” (Page 198) How does it appear that he was an hypocrite? Our Lord gives not the least intimation of it. Surely he “loved him,” not for his hypocrisy, but his sincerity!

Yet he loved the world, and therefore could not keep any of the commandments in their spiritual meaning. And the keeping of these is undoubtedly the way to, though not the cause of, eternal life.

“‘By works his faith was made perfect:’ Appeared to be true.” (Page 200.) No: The natural sense of the words is, “By” the grace superadded while he wrought those “works, his faith was” literally “made perfect.”

“‘He that doeth righteousness is righteous:’ Manifests the truth of his conversion.” (*Ibid.*) Nay, the plain meaning is, He alone is truly righteous, whose faith worketh by love.

“St. James speaks of the justification of our faith.” (Page 201.) Not unless you mean, by that odd expression, our faith being made perfect; for so the Apostle explains his own meaning. Perhaps the word *justified* is once used by St. Paul for *manifested*. But that does not prove it is to be so understood here.

“‘Whoso doeth these things shall never fall’ into total apostasy.” (Page 202.) How pleasing is this to flesh and blood! But David says no such thing. His meaning is, “Who so doeth these things” to the end “shall never fall” into hell.

The Seventh Dialogue is full of important truths. Yet some expressions in it I cannot commend.

“‘One thing thou lackest,’ — the imputed righteousness of Christ.” (Page 216.) You cannot think this is the meaning of the text. Certainly the “one thing” our Lord meant was, the love of God. This was the thing he lacked.

“Is the obedience of Christ insufficient to accomplish our justification?” (Page 222.) Rather I would ask, Is the death of Christ insufficient to purchase it?

“The saints in glory ascribe the whole of their salvation to the blood of the Lamb.” (Page 226.) So do I; and yet I believe “he obtained for all a possibility of salvation.”

“The terms of acceptance for fallen man were a full satisfaction to the divine justice, and a complete conformity to the divine law.” (Page 227.) This you take for granted; but I cannot allow it.

The terms of acceptance for fallen man are, repentance and faith. “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.”

“There are but two methods whereby any can be justified, either by a perfect obedience to the law, or because Christ hath kept the law in our stead.” (*Ibid.*) You should say, “Or by faith in Christ.” I then answer, This is true; and fallen man is justified, not by perfect obedience, but by faith. What Christ has done is the foundation of our justification, not the term or condition of it.

In the Eighth Dialogue likewise there are many great truths, and yet some things liable to exception.

David “God himself dignifies with the most exalted of all characters.” (Page 253.) Far, very far from it. We have more exalted characters than David’s, both in the Old Testament and the New. Such are those of Samuel, Daniel, yea, and Job, in the former; of St. Paul and St. John, in the latter.

“But God styles him ‘a man after his own heart.’” This is the text which has caused many to mistake, for want of considering, First, that this is said

of David in a particular respect, not with regard to his whole character: Secondly, the time at which it was spoken. When was David “a man after God’s own heart?” When God found him “following the ewes great with young,” when he “took him from the sheep-folds.” (Psalm 78:70, 71.) It was in the second or third year of Saul’s reign, that Samuel said to him, “The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people.” (1 Samuel 13:14.) But was he “a man after God’s own heart” all his life? or in all particulars? So far from it, that we have few more exceptionable characters among all the men of God recorded in Scripture.

“There is not a just man upon earth that sinneth not.” Solomon might truly say so, before Christ came. And St. John might, after he came, say as truly, “Whosoever is born of God sinneth not.” (Page 261.) But “in many things we offend all.” That St. James does not speak this of himself, or of real Christians, will clearly appear to all who impartially consider the context.

The Ninth Dialogue proves excellently well, that we cannot be justified by our works.

But have you thoroughly considered the words which occur in the 270th page?

“O children of Adam, you are no longer obliged to love God with all your strength, nor your neighbor as yourselves. Once indeed I insisted on absolute purity of heart; now, I can dispense with some degrees of evil desire. Since Christ has fulfilled the law for you, you need not fulfil it. I will connive at, yea, accommodate my demands to, your weakness.”

I agree with you, that “this doctrine makes the Holy One of God a minister of sin.” And is it not your own? Is not this the very doctrine which you espouse throughout your book?

I cannot but except to several passages also in the Tenth Dialogue. I ask, first,

“Does the righteousness of God ever mean,” as you affirm, “the merits of Christ?” (Page 291.) I believe, not once in all the Scripture. It often means, and particularly in the Epistle to the Romans, God’s method of justifying sinners. When, therefore, you say,

“The righteousness of God means, such a righteousness as may justly challenge his acceptance,” (page 225,) I cannot allow it at all; and this capital mistake must needs lead you into many others. But I follow you step by step.

“In order to entitle us to a reward, there must be an imputation of righteousness.” (*Ibid.*) There must be an interest in Christ; and then “every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.”

“A rebel may be forgiven, without being restored to the dignity of a son.” (Page 293.) A rebel against an earthly King may; but not a rebel against God. In the very same moment that God forgives, we are the sons of God. Therefore this is an idle dispute. For pardon and acceptance, though they may be distinguished, cannot be divided. The words of Job which you cite are wide of the question. Those of Solomon prove no more than this, (and who denies it?) that justification implies both pardon and acceptance.

“Grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life;” (page 295;) that is, the free love of God brings us through justification and sanctification to glory. “That they may receive forgiveness, and a lot among the sanctified;” (*ibid.*;) that is, that they may receive pardon, holiness, heaven.

“Is not the satisfaction made by the death of Christ sufficient to obtain both our full pardon and final happiness?” (*Ibid.*) Unquestionably it is, and neither of the texts you cite proves the contrary.

“If it was requisite for Christ to be baptized, much more to fulfil the moral law.” (Page 296.)

I cannot prove that either one or the other was requisite in order to his purchasing redemption for us.

“By Christ’s sufferings alone, the law was not satisfied.” (Page 297.) Yes, it was; for it required only the alternative, Obey or die. It required no man to obey and die too. If any man had perfectly obeyed, he would not have died. “Where the Scripture ascribes the whole of our salvation to the death of Christ, a part of his humiliation is put for the whole.” (*Ibid.*) I cannot allow this without some proof. “He was obedient unto, death,” is no proof at all; as it does not necessarily imply my more, than that he died in obedience to the Father. In some texts there is a necessity of taking a part for the whole. But in these there is no such necessity.

“Christ undertook to do everything necessary for our redemption;” (page 300;) namely, in a covenant made with the Father. It is sure he did everything necessary; but how does it appear that he undertook this before the foundation of the world, and that by a positive covenant between him and the Father?

You think this appears from four texts:

1. From that, “Thou gavest them to me.” Nay, when any believe, “the Father gives them to Christ.” But this proves no such previous contract.
2. “God hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.” Neither does this prove any such thing.
3. That expression, “The counsel of peace shall be between them,” does not necessarily imply any more, than that both the Father and the Son would concur in the redemption of man.
4. “According to the counsel of his will;” that is, in the way or method he had chosen. Therefore, neither any of these texts, nor all of them, prove what they were brought to prove. “They do by no means prove, that there ever was any such covenant made between the Father and the Son.

“The conditions of the covenant are recorded: ‘Lo, I come to do thy will.’” (Page 301.) Nay, here is no mention of any covenant, nor anything from which it can be inferred. “The recompense stipulated in this glorious treaty.” But I see not one word of the treaty itself. Nor can I possibly allow the existence of it, without far other proof than this. “Another copy of this grand treaty is recorded, Isaiah 49, from the first to the sixth verse.” (*Ibid.*) I have read them, but cannot find a word about it in all those verses.

They contain neither more nor less than a prediction of the salvation of the Gentiles.

“By the covenant of works man was bound to obey in his own person.” (Page 302.) And so he is under the covenant of grace; though not in order to his justification. “The obedience of our surety is accepted instead of our own.” This is neither a safe nor a scriptural way of speaking. I would simply say, “We are accepted through the Beloved. We have redemption through his blood.”

“The second covenant was not made with Adam, or any of his posterity, but with Christ, in those words: ‘The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.’” (Page 303.) For any authority you have from these words, you might as well have said, it was made with the Holy Ghost. These words were not spoken *to* Christ, but *of* him; and give not the least intimation of any such covenant as you plead for. They manifestly contain, if not a covenant made with, a promise made to, Adam and all his posterity.

“Christ, we see, undertook to execute the conditions.” (*Ibid.*) We see no such thing in this text. We see here only a promise of a Savior made by God to man.

“It is true, I cannot fulfill the conditions.” (*Ibid.*) It is not true. The conditions of the new covenant are, “Repent and believe.” And these you can fulfil, through Christ strengthening you. “It is equally true, this is not required at my hands.” It is *equally* true; that is, absolutely false: And most dangerously false. If we allow this, Antinomianism comes in with a full tide. “Christ has performed all that was conditional for me.” Has He repented and believed for you? You endeavor to evade this by saying, “He performed all that was conditional in the covenant of works.” This is nothing to the purpose; for we are not talking of that, but of the covenant of grace. Now, he did not perform all that was conditional in this covenant, unless he repented and believed. “But he did unspeakably more.” It may be so. But he did not do this.

“But if Christ’s perfect obedience be ours, we have no more need of pardon than Christ himself.” (Page 308.) The consequence is good. You have started an objection which you cannot answer. You say indeed, “Yes, we do need pardon; for in many things we offend all.” What then? If his obedience be ours, we still perfectly obey in him.

“Both the branches of the law, the perceptive and the penal, in the case of guilt contracted, must be satisfied.” (Page 309.) Not so. “Christ by his death alone” (so our Church teaches) “fully satisfied for the sins of the whole world.” The same great truth is manifestly taught in the Thirty-first Article. Is it therefore fair, is it honest, for any one to plead the Articles of our Church in defense of absolute predestination; seeing the Seventeenth Article barely defines the term, without either affirming or denying the thing; whereas the Thirty-first totally overthrows and raises it from the foundation?

“Believers, who are notorious transgressors in themselves, have a sinless obedience in Christ.” (*Ibid.*) O siren song! Pleasing sound to James Wheatley, Thomas Williams, James Relly!

I know not one sentence in the Eleventh Dialogue which is liable to exception; but that grand doctrine of Christianity, original sin, is therein proved by irrefragable arguments.

The Twelfth, likewise, is unexceptionable; and contains such an illustration of the wisdom of God in the structure of the human body, as I believe cannot be paralleled in either ancient or modern writers.

The former part of the Thirteenth Dialogue is admirable: To the latter I have some objection.

“Elijah failed in his resignation, and even Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips.” (Vol. II., page 44.) It is true; but if you could likewise fix some blot upon venerable Samuel and beloved Daniel it would prove nothing. For no scripture teaches, that the holiness of Christians is to be measured by that of any Jew.

“Do not the best of men frequently feel disorder in their affections? Do not they often complain, ‘When I would do good, evil is present with me?’” (Page 46.) I believe not. You and I are only able to answer for ourselves. “Do not they say, ‘We groan, being burdened with the workings of inbred corruption?’” You know, this is not the meaning of the text. The whole context shows, the cause of that groaning was their longing “to be with Christ.”

“The cure” of sin “will be perfected in heaven.” (Page 47.) Nay, surely in paradise, if no sooner. “This is a noble prerogative of the beatific vision.” No; it will then come too late. If sin remains in us till the day of judgment, it will remain forever. “Our present blessedness does not consist in being free from sin.” I really think it does. But whether it does or no, if we are not free from sin, we are not Christian believers. For to all these the Apostle declares, “Being made free from sin, ye are become the servants of righteousness.” (Romans 6:18.)

“If we were perfect in piety,” (St. John’s word is, “perfect in love,”) “Christ’s priestly office would be superseded.” No; we should still need his Spirit, and consequently his intercession, for the continuance of that love from moment to moment. Beside, we should still be encompassed with infirmities, and liable to mistakes, from which words or actions might follow, even though the heart was all love, which were not exactly right. Therefore, in all these respects, we should still have need of Christ’s priestly office; and therefore, as long as he remains in the body, the greatest saint may say,

“Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death”

The test cited from Exodus asserts nothing less than, that iniquity “cleaves to all our holy things till death.”

“Sin remains, that the righteousness of faith may have its due honor.” (Page 48.) And will the righteousness of faith have its due honor no longer than sin remains in us? Then it must remain not only on earth and in paradise, but in heaven also. “And the sanctification of the Spirit its proper esteem.” Would it not have more esteem, if it were a perfect work?

“It” (sin) “will make us lowly in our own eyes.” (*Ibid.*) What! will pride make us lowly? Surely the utter destruction of pride would do this more effectually. “It will make us compassionate.” Would not an entire renewal in the image of God make us much more so? “It will teach us to admire the riches of grace.” Yea, but a fuller experience of it, by a thorough sanctification of spirit, soul, and body, will make us admire it more. “It will reconcile us to death.” Indeed it will not; nor will anything do this like perfect love.

“It will endear the blood and intercession of Christ.” (Page 49.) Nay, these can never be so dear to any as to those who experience their full virtue, who are “filled with the fulness” of God. Nor can any “feel their continual need” of Christ, or “rely on him,” in the manner which these do.

“The claims of the law are all answered.” (*Dialogue* 14, page 57.) If so, Count Zinzendorf is absolutely in the right: Neither God nor man can claim my obedience to it. Is not this Antinomianism without a mask?

“Your sins are expiated through the death of Christ, and a righteousness given you by which you have free access to God.” (Page 69.) This is not scriptural language. I would simply say, “By him we have access to the Father.”

There are many other expressions in this Dialogue to which I have the same objection; namely,

1. That they are unscriptural;
2. That they directly lead to Antinomianism.

The First Letter contains some very useful heads of self-examination. In the Second, I read, “There is a righteousness which supplies all that the creature needs. To prove this momentous point is the design of the following sheets.”

I have seen such terrible effects of this unscriptural way of speaking, even on those “who had once clean escaped from the pollutions of the world,” that I cannot but earnestly wish you would speak no otherwise than do

the oracles of God. Certainly this *mode of expression* is not *momentous*. It is always dangerous, often fatal.

“There sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin had reigned unto death, so might grace,” the free love of God, “reign through righteousness,” through our justification and sanctification, “unto eternal life.” (Romans 5:20, 21.) This is the plain, natural meaning of the words. It does not appear that one word is spoken here about imputed righteousness; neither in the passages cited in the next page from the Common Prayer and the Articles. In the Homily likewise that phrase is not found at all, and the main stress is laid on Christ’s shedding his blood. Nor is the *phrase* (concerning the *thing* there is no question) found in any part of the Homilies. (*Letter 3*, page 93.)

“If the Fathers are not explicit with regard to the imputation of active righteousness, they abound in passages which evince the substitution of Christ in our stead; passages which disclaim all dependence on any duties of our own, and fix our hopes wholly on the merits of our Savior. When this is the case, I am very little solicitous about any particular forms of expression.” (Page 101.) O lay aside then those questionable, dangerous forms, and keep closely to the scriptural!

“The authority of our Church, and of those eminent Divines,” (*Letter 4*, p. 105,) does not touch those “particular forms of expression;” neither do any of the texts which you afterwards cite. As to the doctrine, we are agreed.

“The righteousness of God signifies the righteousness which God-Man wrought out.” (*Ibid.*) No; it signifies God’s method of justifying sinners.

“The victims figured the expiation by Christ’s death; the clothing with skins, the imputation of his righteousness.” (Page 107.) That does not appear. Did not the one rather figure our justification; the other, our sanctification?

Almost every text quoted in this and the following letter in support of that particular form of expression is distorted above measure from the plain,

obvious meaning which is pointed out by the context. I shall instance in a few, and just set down their true meaning without any farther remarks. (Page 109.)

To “show unto man his uprightness;” to convince him of God’s justice in so publishing him.

“He shall receive the blessing,” pardon, “from the Lord, and righteousness,” holiness, “from the God of his salvation;” the God who saveth him both from the guilt and from the power of sin. (Page 110.)

I will “make mention of thy righteousness only:” Of thy mercy; so the word frequently means in the Old Testament. So it unquestionably means in that text, “In” or by “thy righteousness shall they be exalted.” (Page 111.)

“Sion shall be redeemed with judgment,” after severe punishment, “and her converts with righteousness,” with the tender mercy of God following that punishment. (Page 112.)

“In,” or through, “the Lord I have righteousness and strength,” justification and sanctification; “he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation,” saved me from the guilt and power of sin; both of which are again expressed by, “He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” (Page 113.)

“My righteousness,” my mercy, “shall not be abolished.” (Page 114.)

“To make reconciliation for iniquity,” to atone for all our sins, “and to bring in everlasting righteousness,” spotless holiness into our souls. And this righteousness is not human, but divine. It is the gift and the work of God. (Page 116.)

“The Lord our Righteousness;” the author both of our justification and sanctification. (Page 117.)

“What righteousness shall give us peace at the last day, inherent or imputed?” (Page 127.) Both. Christ died for us and lives in us, “that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.”

“That have obtained like precious faith through the righteousness,” the mercy, “of our Lord.” “Seek we the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” the holiness which springs from God reigning in you. (*Letter 5*, p. 131.)

“Therein is revealed the righteousness of God,” God’s method of justifying sinners. (Page 132.)

“We establish the law, as we expect no salvation without a perfect conformity to it, namely, by Christ.” (Page 135.) Is not this a mere quibble? and a quibble which, after all the labored evasions of Witsius and a thousand more, does totally “make void the law?” But not so does St. Paul teach. According to him, “without holiness,” personal holiness, “no man shall see the Lord;” none who is not himself conformed to the law of God here, “shall see the Lord” in glory.

This is the grand, palpable objection to that whole scheme. It directly “makes void the law.” It makes thousands content to live and die “transgressors of the law,” because Christ fulfilled it “for them.” Therefore, though I believe he hath lived and died for me, yet I would speak very tenderly and sparingly of the former, (and never separately from the latter,) even as sparingly as do the Scriptures, for fear of this dreadful consequence.

“‘The gift of righteousness’ must signify a righteousness not their own.” (Page 138.) Yes, it signifies the righteousness or holiness which God gives to, and works in, them.

“‘The obedience of one’ is Christ’s actual performance of the whole law.” (Page 139.) So here his passion is fairly left out! Whereas his “becoming obedient unto death,” that is dying for man, is certainly the chief part, if not the whole, which is meant by that expression.

“‘That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled’ in us; that is, by our representative in our nature.” (*Ibid.*) Amazing! But this, you say, “agrees with the tenor of the Apostle’s arguing. For he is demonstrating, we cannot be Justified by our own conformity to the law.” No; not here. He is not speaking here of the cause of our justification, but the fruits of it. Therefore, that unnatural sense of his words does not at all “agree with the tenor of his arguing.”

I totally deny the criticism on **δικαιοσύνη** and **δικαίωμα**, and cannot conceive on what authority it is founded. O how deep an aversion to inward holiness does this scheme naturally create! (Page 140.)

“The righteousness they attained could not be any personal righteousness.” (Page 142.) Certainly it was: It was implanted as well as imputed.

“For ‘instruction in righteousness,’ in the righteousness of Christ.” (Page 145.) Was there ever such a comment before? The plain meaning is, “for training up in holiness” of heart and of life.

“He shall convince the world of righteousness;” that I am not a sinner, but innocent and holy. (Page 146.)

“‘That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ Not intrinsically, but imputatively.” (Page 148.) Both the one and the other. God, through him, first accounts and then makes us righteous. Accordingly,

“‘The righteousness which is of God by faith,’ is both imputed and inherent.” (Page 152.)

“By faith fixes on both the meritorious life and atoning death of Christ.” (Page 153.) Here we clearly agree. Hold then to this, and never talk of the former without the latter. If you do, you cannot say, “Here we are exposed to no hazard.” Yes, you are to an exceeding great one; even the hazard of living and dying without holiness. And then we are lost forever.

The Sixth Letter contains an admirable account of the earth and atmosphere, and comprises abundance of sense in a narrow compass, expressed in beautiful language.

Gems have “a seat on the virtuous fair one’s breast.” (Page 177.) I cannot reconcile this with St. Paul. He says, “Not with pearls;” by a parity of reason, Not with diamonds. But in all things I perceive you are too favorable, both to “the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eye.” You are a gentle casuist as to every self-indulgence which a plentiful fortune can furnish.

“Our Savior’s obedience.” (Page 182.) O say, with the good old Puritans, “Our Savior’s death or merits!” We swarm with Antinomians on every side. Why are you at such pains to increase their number?

“My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation;” thy mercy which brings my salvation. (Page 194.)

The Eighth Letter is an excellent description of the supreme greatness of Christ. I do not observe one sentence in it, which I cannot cheerfully subscribe to.

The Ninth Letter, containing a description of the sea, with various inferences deduced therefrom, is likewise a masterpiece, for justness of sentiment, as well as beauty of language. But I doubt whether “mere shrimps “ (page 291) be not too low an expression; and whether you might not as well have said nothing of “cod, the standing repast of lent;” or concerning “the exquisite relish of turbot, or the deliciousness of sturgeon.” Are not such observations beneath the dignity of a Minister of Christ? I have the same doubt concerning what is said of “delicately flavored tea, finely scented coffee, the friendly bowl, the pyramid of Italian figs, and the pastacia-nut of Aleppo.” (Page 264.) Beside that the mentioning these in such a manner is a strong encouragement of luxury and sensuality. And does the world need this? The English in particular! *Si non insaniunt satis sua sponte, instiga.*³⁷

“Those treasures which spring from the imputation of Christ’s righteousness.” (*Letter 10*, p. 271.) Not a word of his atoning blood! Why do so many men love to speak of his righteousness, rather than his atonement? I fear, because it affords a fairer excuse for their own unrighteousness. To cut off this, is it not better to mention both together? at least, never to name the former without the latter?

“Faith is a persuasion that Christ has shed his blood for me, and fulfilled all righteousness in my stead.” (Page 285.) I can by no means subscribe to this definition. There are hundreds, yea, thousands of true believers, who never once thought one way or the other of Christ’s fulfilling all righteousness in their stead. I personally know many who, to this very hour, have no idea of it; and yet have each of them a divine evidence and conviction, “Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.” This is St. Paul’s account of faith; and it is sufficient. He that thus believes is justified.

“It is a sure means of purifying the heart, and never fails to work by love.” (Page 287.) It surely purifies the heart, — if we abide in it; but not if we “draw back to perdition.” It never fails to work by love while it continues; but if itself fail, farewell both love and good works.

“Faith is the hand which receives all that is laid up in Christ.” Consequently, if we make “shipwreck of the faith,” how much so ever is laid up in Christ, from that hour we receive nothing.

“Faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ is a fundamental principle in the gospel.” (*Letter 11*, p. 288.) If so, what becomes of all those who think nothing about imputed righteousness? How many who are full of faith and love, if this be true, must perish everlastingly!

“Thy hands must urge the way of the deadly weapon through the shivering flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart.” (Page 297.) Are not these descriptions far too strong? May they not occasion unprofitable reasonings in many readers?

“How can he justify it to the world?” (Page 298.) Not at all. Call this then justify his faith to the world?

“You take the certain way to obtain comfort, — the righteousness of Jesus Christ.” (Page 304.) What, without the atonement? Strange fondness for an unscriptural, dangerous mode of expression!

“So the merits of Christ are derived to all the faithful.” (Page 306.) Rather, the fruits of the Spirit; which are likewise plainly typified by the oil in Zechariah’s vision.

“Has the law any demand? It must go to him for satisfaction.” (Page 310.) Suppose, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” then I am not obliged to love my neighbor: Christ has satisfied the demand of the law for me Is not this the very quintessence of Antinomianism?

“The righteousness wrought out by Jesus Christ is wrought out for all his people, to be the cause of their justification, and the purchase of their salvation. The righteousness is the cause, and the purchase.” (Page 311.) So the death of Christ is not so much as named! “For all his people.” But what becomes of all other people? They must inevitably perish forever. The die was cast or ever they were in being. The doctrine to pass them by has

Consign’d their unborn souls to hell,
And damn’d them from their mother’s womb!

I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea, an Atheist, than I could believe this. It is less absurd to deny the very being of God, than to make him an almighty tyrant.

“The whole world and all its seasons are rich with our Creator’s goodness. His tender mercies are over all his works.” (Page 318.) Are they over the bulk of mankind? Where is his goodness to the non-elect? How are his tender mercies over them? “His temporal blessings are given to them.” But are they to them blessings at all? Are they not all curses? Does not God

know they are? that they will only increase their damnation? Does not he design they should? And this you call goodness: This is tender mercy!

“May we not discern pregnant proofs of goodness in each individual object?” (Page 321.) No; on your scheme, not a spark of it, in this world or the next, to the far greater part of the world of his own hands.

“Is God a generous benefactor to the meanest animals, to the lowest reptile? And will he deny my friend what is necessary to his present comfort, and his final acceptance?” (Page 334.) Yea, will he deny it to any soul that he has made? Would you deny it to any, if it were in your power?

But if you loved whom God abhorr’d,
The servant were above his Lord.

“The ‘wedding garment’ here means holiness.” (Page 337.)

“This is his tender complaint, ‘They will not come unto me!’” (Page 340.) Nay, that is not the case; they cannot. He himself has decreed, not to give them that grace without which their coming is impossible.

“The grand end which God proposes in all his favorable dispensations to fallen man is, to demonstrate the sovereignty of his grace.” Not so: To impart happiness to his creatures is his grand end herein. Barely to demonstrate his sovereignty is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not the most high God.

“God hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants. He is a boundless ocean of good.” (Page 341.) Nay, that ocean is far from boundless, if it wholly passes by nine tenths of mankind.

“You cannot suppose God would enter into a fresh covenant with a rebel.” (Page 342.) I both suppose and know he did. “God made the new covenant with Christ, and charged him with the performance of the conditions.” I deny both these assertions, which are the central point wherein Calvinism and Antinomianism meet. “I have made a covenant

with my chosen;” namely, with “David my servant.” So God himself explains it.

“He will wash you in the blood which atones, and invest you with the righteousness which justifies.” (Page 362.) Why should you thus continually put asunder what God has joined?

“God himself at the last day pronounces them righteous, because they are interested in the obedience of the Redeemer.” (Page 440.) Rather, because they are washed in his blood, and renewed by his Spirit.

Upon the whole, I cannot but wish that the plan of these Dialogues had been executed in a different manner. Most of the grand truths of Christianity are herein both explained and proved with great strength and clearness. Why was anything intermixed which could prevent any serious Christian’s recommending them to all mankind? anything which must necessarily render them exceptionable to so many thousands of the children of God? In practical writings, I studiously abstain from the very shadow of controversy. Nay, even in controversial, I do not knowingly write one line, to which any but my opponent would object. For opinions, shall I destroy the work of God? Then am I a bigot indeed. Much more, if I would not drop any mode of expression, rather than offend either Jew, or Gentile, or the Church of God.

I am, with great sincerity,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

3. After waiting near two years, and receiving no answer to the second any more than the first Letter, in 1758 I printed “A Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion.” I designed this at first only for the Preachers who were in connection with me. But I was afterwards induced to think it might be of use to others that were under my care. I designed it

for these, and these alone, though I could not help its falling into other hands. Accordingly, I said, “My design in publishing the following Tracts, is not to reclaim, but to preserve.” To preserve those to whom I had frequently and strongly recommended Mr. Hervey’s Dialogues, from what I disapproved of therein, I inserted the above Letter; and that without any addition, as intending it only “for those who already knew the truth,” whom I wished to preserve from everything wrong, while they profited by what was admirably right, in his Dialogues. No wonder therefore that those notes (as Mr. Hervey remarks in the same page) “have rather the air of a caveat than a confutation.” I never intended them for a confutation; and even when I sent them to the press I designed them merely as a caveat to my friends against imbibing truth and error together.

4. A considerable time after, I was much surprised by an information, that Mr. Hervey “was going to publish against me.” I immediately wrote a short letter to him, which his friends may easily find among his papers. It was to this effect, and, so far as I can recollect, nearly in these words: —

“After waiting above a year for an answer to my last letter, I printed it in the close of a larger treatise. If you have anything to object to me, I expect that, as a gentleman and a Christian, you will behave to me as I did to you. Send me the letter first. And if I do not give you a satisfactory answer in a year, then publish it to all the world.”

I am inclined to believe, this prevented the publication of these papers during his life. And with his dying breath, (I have it under his brother’s hand,) he desired they might not be published at all. How comes it then to be done now? I suppose, through the zeal of those who are so vehemently attached to their own opinions, that they would sacrifice all things to them; and who may sincerely believe, that the bringing any reproach upon me would be “doing God service.”

5. In this prefatory discourse, I do not intend to “answer Mr. Hervey’s book.” Shall my hand be upon that saint of God? No; let him rest in Abraham’s bosom. When my warfare is accomplished, may I rest with him till the resurrection of the just! Nor do I intend to say anything on those questions, whether Christ was the Mediator of the new covenant, or

one of the contracting parties, or both the Mediator and a contracting party; neither indeed on any point of Calvinism: Herein I think and let think. I do not design to contend about the phrase, *imputed righteousness*; nor yet about the sense of it. I cannot explain this more fully or clearly than it is done in the ensuing Tract. I purpose only to speak a little on the personal accusations which are brought against me; and I doubt not but I shall convince all impartial men that I am clear of the things laid to my charge.

6. The chief of these are twelve. I might reckon many more; but they are all reducible to one or other of these. Each of these accusations is frequently repeated, and in great variety of language. But I shall be easily excused for citing only a few out of numerous passages to the same effect.

The First is, that I “assert things without proof.” This is undoubtedly true. In the Letter before us, I touch upon many things, without once attempting to prove them. For I designed only,

(1.)To warn a friend, and give him matter for farther consideration.

(2.)To guard others from slipping into mistakes. Therefore Mr.

Hervey need not have said, “Never did I meet with a person who seemed so totally ignorant, that there is a wide difference between saying and proving.” (Page 236.) I am not ignorant of this; and so my friend would have found, had he favored me with a private answer. It would then have lain upon me to prove what I had barely said before.

7. I am accused, Secondly, of being self-sufficient, positive, magisterial. “Mr. Wesley, cased in his own self-sufficiency, esteems all these evidences as mere nothings. Reason, grammar, precedents are eclipsed by his bare negative.” (Page 246.)

I know not which way this can be inferred from anything I have spoken to Mr. Hervey.

“Mr. Wesley replies, with the solemnity of a censor, and the authority of a dictator, ‘ No.’” (Page 90.)

I am not conscious, that, in making that reply, I assumed any authority at all.

“Here I see nothing but the usual argument, the master’s *ipse dixit*.” (Page 139.)

Love might have seen the friend, not the master, taking the liberty which he had been entreated to take.

“Strange! That a man of ordinary discernment should offer to obtrude upon the public such a multitude of naked, unsupported, magisterial assertions! should ever be able to persuade himself; that a positive air would pass for demonstration!” (Page 240.)

I thought nothing of the public when I wrote this Letter, but; spoke freely and artlessly to a friend; and I spoke as a friend, (so far as I can judge,) not a censor or dictator.

8. I am accused, Thirdly, of reasoning loosely and wildly. “Is not this the loose way of arguing you blame in Mr. Wesley” (Page 233.)

“What wild reasoning is here! Such premises and such an inference” (but they are none of mine) “will probably incline the reader to think of a sunbeam and a clod, connected with bands of smoke.” (Page 103.)

When I write for the public, especially in controversy, I seek for connected arguments. *Sed nunc non erat his locus.*³⁹ The compass of a letter would hardly admit of them.

9. I am accused, in the Fourth place, of self-contradiction. “See how you are entangled in your own net; how, without being chased by an enemy, you run yourself aground. You avouch palpable inconsistencies.” (Page 195.)

“Will Mr. Wesley never have done with self-contradiction? Why will he give me such repeated cause to complain, *Quo teneam vultum mutantem Protea nodo?*”⁴⁰

(Page 142.) “See, my friend, how thy own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thy own lips testify against thee! If you persist in such palpable inconsistencies, who can forbear taking up that taunting proverb, ‘A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways?’” (Page 223.)

“Contradiction, didst thou ever know so trusty a friend, or so faithful a devotee? Many people are ready enough to contradict others. But it seems all one to this gentleman, whether it be another or himself, so he may but contradict.” (Page 227.)

Could one imagine, that Mr. Hervey had added to this very page, a note wherein are these words, “The contemptuous and the reproachful, even when really deserved, can have no tendency to confirm our argument, but to provoke resentment. They are not the most promising means of joining us together in one mind and judgment; but rather the sure way to widen the breach and increase animosity.”

These I acknowledge as Mr. Hervey’s words; for they breathe Mr. Hervey’s spirit. But if so, the former came from another heart, though perhaps they were transcribed by his hand.

But whence arises this whole charge of inconsistency and self-contradiction? Merely from straining, winding to and fro, and distorting a few innocent words. For wherein have I contradicted myself, taking words in their unforced, natural construction, or even changed my judgment in any one respect, with regard to justification, (nay, Mr. Hervey, in one of his Letters, formerly published, blames me for “never changing my judgment at all!”) since I printed the sermon on “Salvation by Faith,” in the year 1738? From that day I have steadily believed and uniformly asserted, as all my writings testify,

- (1.) That the only cause of our present and eternal salvation is what Christ has done and suffered for us.

- (2.) That we are justified and sanctified by faith alone, faith in him who lived and died for us. Let my words be twisted and wire-drawn ever so long, they will not fairly bear any other meaning, nor, without apparent violence, contradict either of these propositions. It is true,
- (3.) That I have, during this whole time, occasionally used those expressions, *imputed righteousness*, *the righteousness of Christ*, and others of the same kind, — although the verses cited in several of Mr. Hervey's Letters are not mine, but my brother's. But it is equally true,
- (4.) That I never used them at all, in any other meaning than that sound, scriptural one, wherein they are used by many eminent men, Calvin in particular. I choose not to speak farther on this head, lest I should be under a disagreeable necessity of saying anything that might even seem disrespectful to my ever-loved and honored friend.

10. I am accused, Fifthly, of not understanding criticism and divinity. "What a piddling criticism is this!" (Page 220.)

"I can no more admire your taste as a critic, than your doctrine as a Divine." (Page 145.)

"In this interpretation I can neither discern the true critic, nor the sound Divine." (Page 214.)

I am not a judge in my own cause. What I am ignorant of, I desire to learn.

I do not know whether the following charge may not fall under this head:

—

"In another person, this would look like profane levity: In Mr. Wesley, the softest appellation we can give it is idle pomp." (Page 7.)

What! The using the expression, "for Christ's sake?" The whole paragraph runs thus: —

“‘We are not solicitous as to any particular set of phrases.’ (Page 212.) Then for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of the souls which he has purchased with his blood, do not dispute for that particular phrase, the imputed righteousness of Christ. It is not scriptural; it is not necessary. Men who scruple to use, men who never heard, the expression, may yet ‘be humbled as repenting criminals at his feet, and rely as devoted pensioners on his merits.’ But it has done immense hurt. I have had abundant proof, that the frequent use of this unnecessary phrase, instead of furthering men’s progress in vital holiness, has made them satisfied without any holiness at all.” Is the speaking earnestly on such a subject “idle pomp?” Are not the souls of men at stake? And most certainly the whole sentence is at as great a distance from levity as from profaneness.

11. I am accused, Sixthly, of acting in a manner unworthy a gentleman, a Christian, or a man of sense.

“I am quite ashamed of your meanness,” (strong words!) “and grieved at your uncharitable rashness;” in naming three men, the fellows of whom, I hope, are not to be found in England.” How unworthy is such a proceeding either of the gentleman, the Christian, or the man of sense! “ (Page 186.)

I am not conscious of either meanness, rashness, or uncharitableness in this matter. But I am willing to refer it to the judgment of any who know the men and their communication.

12. I am accused, Seventhly, of impudence.

“Harmless enough, I must own; but what follows is not quite so modest.” (Page 201.)

“Your last daring innovation.” Affirming that the word usually rendered *righteousness* does sometimes mean *mercy*. I dare not say otherwise. I must affirm this still, both of the Hebrew and Greek word.

“Everybody knows that the particle *beth* signifies *in*, and everybody but Mr. Wesley would blush to assert the contrary.” (Page 220.)

I never asserted the contrary, nor did I ever deny, that the particle *ev* likewise signifies *in*. Yet I affirm that both the former and the latter have several other significations.

13. I am accused, Eighthly, of denying justification by faith, and of being an enemy to the righteousness of Christ.

“We have liberty to look upon ourselves as justified without any works of our own.” (True; but not without faith.) “This you would supersede and abolish.” (Page 261.)

The whole tenor of my writing, preaching, and conversation clears me of this charge.

“Why should you be so averse to the righteousness of God our Savior?” (Page 227.)

Far, very far from it. I admire, love, and embrace it, as the ground of all my hope, as the only foundation of every blessing, in time and in eternity.

“Why should you ransack all the stores of your learning and knowledge, to exclude this glorious truth from the Bible?”

I do just the contrary. I use whatever knowledge God has given me, to defend that glorious truth, “Jesus Christ is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

14. The Ninth accusation is short: You are an heretic, and your doctrine poisonous.

“You scarce distinguish yourself by this language from an heretic. You may rank with the Arian and Socinian.” (Page 140.)

What is *this language*? The saying, “The free love of God brings us through justification and sanctification to glory.” True; neither do I distinguish myself from a Jew, by saying, “There is one God.” Does it follow, that I may rank with Jews? that I am a Jew too?

“Such errors are extremely pernicious. They are like poison mixed with food.” (Page 120.)

Let those errors be pointed out and proved. I shall then willingly retract them.

15. I am accused, Tenthly, with being an Antinomian. ““Do you then establish the law?’ Are not you the Antinomian?” (Page 143.)

I should not imagine Mr. Hervey was in earnest here, but that I read in another place, —

“It is one of your leading errors, that you form low, scanty apprehensions of God’s law.” (Page 69.)

What apprehensions I form of God’s law, any one may see in the second and third volumes of my Sermons; wherein, after explaining all the particular branches of it contained in our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, I say of it in general, Vol. V., p. 438: —

“This law is an incorruptible picture of the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. It is He whom in his essence no man hath seen or can see, made visible to men and angels. It is the face of God unveiled; God manifested to his creatures, as they are able to bear it. It is the heart of God disclosed to man; yea, in some sense, we may apply to his law what the Apostle says of his Son, it is ‘the streaming forth or outbeaming of his glory, the express image of his person.’

“What is the law but divine virtue and wisdom, assuming a visible form? What is it but the original ideas of truth and good, which were lodged in the uncreated mind from eternity, now drawn forth and clothed with such a vehicle, as to appear even to human understanding?

“The law of God is a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature; yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of his essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most

High.” Are these low and scanty apprehensions of God’s law? Or are any such found in the preceding sermons? Can any one form higher apprehensions of it? If not, let this accusation sink forever.

16. I am accused, in the Eleventh place, for teaching Popish doctrine: —

“Mr. Wesley, setting aside pardon and reconciliations together with the one perfect righteousness that procures them,” (I set aside neither the one or the other,) “ascribes all to the love of God. This notion may pass current at Rome, but not among the Protestant Churches.” (Page 101.)

“This was the doctrine established by the Council of Trent.” (But it is not mine.) “This is still maintained in the conclave of Rome.” (Page 117.) But it is not maintained by me, nor any of my friends. We teach quite the contrary.

“I acquit you from the charge of being a Jesuit or a Papist;” (so far, so good;) “but nobody, I apprehend, can acquit your principles from halting between Protestantism and Popery:” (No more than the principles of all who believe that “Christ tasted death for every man:”) “You have stolen the unhallowed fire, and are infected with the leaven of Antichrist. You have adopted papistial tenets,” (I know not which, and should be glad anyone would inform me,) “and are listening to ‘the mother of abominations’ more than you are aware.” (Page 118.) But let it be observed, the holding universal redemption is no proof of this. For thousands of Papists, yea, all the Dominican Friars, hold particular redemption.

“The moment in which saints depart from the body, they are in the highest heavens. Here is no hint of any intermediate state. This is the Popish notion.” And the Protestant too: It is the notion of many very eminent Divines of our own Church. Bishop Smalridge, in particular, has published a celebrated sermon upon it. “I am very sorry your opinions are so much like the man of sin.” (*Ibid.*)

In this article they are not like at all; they are directly opposite. For the Papists believe, even good men undergo a painful purgatory after death. I believe there is no pain after death, unless to those who perish forever.

17. The grand charge remains: I am accused, Lastly, and that over and over, in great variety of expressions, of being a knave, a dishonest man, one of no truth, justice, or integrity.

- (1.)The First proof of it is this: “We have Aspasio’s words; but in a patched and disfigured condition.” (Page 20.)

The words I quoted are: “As sin and misery have abounded through the First Adam, mercy and grace have much more abounded through the Second; so that now none have reason to complain.”

That Aspasio’s words are here abridged, is true; that these are patched or disfigured, is not true, as every man of common sense must see. So this is no proof of dishonesty.

- (2.)See another: “Turn inward, and you will probably discern more than a little disingenuity in your own procedure.” (Page 83.)

Mr. Hervey said, “On Christ’s death sinners are to rely as the cause of their forgiveness; on Christ’s obedience, as the ground of their acceptance.” I asked, “How does this agree with page 58, where we read these words? ‘However I may express myself, I would always have the obedience and the death of Christ understood as a glorious aggregate, looking upon all this as the foundation of my hope.’” I ask again, How does the former sentence agree with this? And if a man think it agrees perfectly well, yet he has no ground to charge me with disingenuity for thinking otherwise.

- (3.)A Third proof is brought, page 37: “Theron calls the terms inherent and imputed, nice distinctions, and metaphysical subtleties. Mr. Wesley makes Aspasio apply this to the active and

passive righteousness of Christ, whereas he is treating of a subject totally different.”

Upon recurring to the “Dialogues,” I find this is true. Here therefore is a breach of literary justice. But it was not a designed one; as may appear from hence, that this was originally sent to Mr. Hervey himself, and him only. Now, had I been ever so dishonest, I should not have been so foolish, had I been conscious of any dishonest dealing, as to appeal to him, who of all others could not fail immediately to detect it.

- (4.) A Fourth runs thus: “‘Barely to demonstrate his sovereignty, is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not the most high God.’ Such a fraudulent quotation I have not seen, no, not in the Critical Reviewers. To mark the first sentence with commas, and thereby assign it to me, is really a masterpiece, especially when you have thrust in the word *barely*, and lopped off the word *grace*.” (Page 284.)

In my Letter the whole paragraph is: “‘The grand end which God proposes in all his favorable dispensations to fallen man is, to demonstrate the sovereignty of his grace.’” (Is the word *barely* thrust in here, or the word *grace* lopped off? And could anyone, who had eyes to read this, be deceived by my citing afterward part of this sentence?) “Not so; to impart happiness to his creatures is his grand end herein. Barely ‘to demonstrate his sovereignty’ is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not the most high God.”

You see, there needs only to correct the mistake of the printer, who sets the commas on the wrong word, and this “specimen too of my want of integrity” vanishes into nothing.

Suffer me to observe once more, (and let it be once for all,) that the sending false quotations of a man’s book to himself, and that while there was not the least design or thought of publishing what was so sent, could never be a proof of want of integrity, but of attention, or at most, of understanding.

(5.) But this will not avail in the following case: “Review a passage of your book on Original Sin. Here you scruple not to overleap the bounds of sincerity and truth. Aspasio had said, ‘As Adam was a public person, and acted in the stead of all mankind; so Christ was a public person, and acted in behalf of all his people. As Adam was the first general representative of this kind, Christ was the second and the last.’ Here you substitute the word *mankind* instead of *this kind*. I at first thought, it might be an inadvertency, or an error of the press, till I looked to the bottom of the page, where I found the following words inclosed within the marks of the same quotation:” (That is, the commas, which ought to have been set five lines sooner, are set at the end of the paragraph:) “‘All these expressions demonstrate, that Adam (as well as Christ) was a representative of all mankind; and that what he did in this capacity did not terminate in himself, but affected all whom he represented.’ (*Original Sin*, page 268; *Dialogues*, page 137.) Then I could no longer forbear crying out, ‘There is treachery, O Ahaziah!’” (Page 278.)

Treachery! *Cui bono*? “For what end?” Can any guess? What was I to gain thereby? Of what possible advantage could it be, either to me or to the cause I was defending? What possible view could I have therein? And would I cheat for cheating sake? I was not here talking either of general or particular redemption. I purposely declined entering into the question throughout that whole treatise. Every candid man will therefore naturally suppose, that both the misplacing the commas, and the putting *mankind* for *this kind*, were the printer’s fault, not mine; a part of those numerous errors of the press, which were occasioned by my absence from it, and the inaccuracy of the corrector.

18. I will not tire either my reader or myself, by citing any more passages of this kind; although the circumstances are so plausibly related, and so strongly amplified, that, upon the first reading of each, I was myself ready to cry out, “Surely this must be true!” I hope the preceding specimen may suffice, and prevent impartial men from judging rashly. I shall add but one passage more; but it is a very extraordinary one; such as none can deny to be a home thrust, a blow under the fifth rib: —

“My dear Sir, let me give you a word of friendly advice. Before you turn Turk, Deist, or Atheist, see that you first become an honest man. They will all disown you, if you go over to their party destitute of common honesty.” (Page 277.)

Upon what is this wonderful advice grounded? and this peremptory declaration, that, as I am now, even Turks and Deists, yea, Atheists, would disown me? Why, upon the printer’s blunder, — putting *mankind*: for *this kind*, and setting the commas in the wrong place!

“And is this thy voice, my son David?” Is this thy tender, loving, grateful spirit? No, “the hand of Joab is in all this!” I acknowledge the hand, the heart, of William Cudworth. I perceive, it was not an empty boast, (as I was at first inclined to think,) which he uttered to Mr. Pearse, at Bury, before my friend went to paradise, — “Mr. Hervey has given me full power to put out and *put in* what I please.”

But he too is gone hence; and he knows now whether I am an honest man or no. It cannot be long, even in the course of nature, before I shall follow them.

My race of glory’s run, and race of shame;
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

I could wish till then to be at peace with all men; but the will of the Lord be done! Peace or war, ease or pain, life or death, is good, so I may but “finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

HOXTON-SQUARE,
Nov. 16, 1764.

SOME REMARKS

ON

“A DEFENSE OF THE PREFACE TO THE EDINBURGH EDITION OF ASPASIO VINDICATED.”

EDINBURGH, *May*, 1766.

I HAVE neither time nor inclination to write a formal answer to the Reverend Dr. Erskine’s tract. My hope of convincing him is lost; he has drunk in all the spirit of the book he has published. But I owe it to God and his children to say something for myself, when I am attacked in so violent a manner, if haply some may take knowledge, that I also endeavor to “live honestly, and to serve God.”

1. Dr. Erskine says, “An edition of these Letters has been published in London, from the author’s own manuscripts, which puts the authenticity of them beyond doubt.” I answer, This is a mistake; impartial men doubt of their authenticity as much as ever. (I mean, not with regard to the Letters in general, but to many particular passages.) And that for two reasons: First, because those passages breathe an acrimony and bitterness which Mr. Hervey in his lifetime never showed to any one, and least of all to one he was deeply obliged to. Surely this is not what Dr. E. terms his “scriptural and animated manner.” I hope it was not for this cause that he pronounces this “equal, if not superior, to any one of his controversial pieces published in his lifetime.” Indeed, I know of no controversial piece at all which he published in his lifetime. His “Dialogues” he no more intended for such, than his “Meditations among the Tombs.” A Second reason for doubting of their authenticity is, that he told his brother, with his diving voice, (I have it under his brother’s own hand,) “I desire my

Letters may not be published; because great part of them is written in a shorthand which none but myself can read.”

2. But the present question lies, not between me and Mr. Hervey, but between Dr. E. and me. He vehemently attacks me for saying, “Orthodoxy, or right opinion, is at best but a very slender part of religion, if any part of it at all.” He labors to deduce the most frightful consequences from it, and cries, “If once men believe that right opinion is a slender part of religion, if any part of religion, or no part at all, there is scarce any thing so foolish, or so wicked, which Satan may not prompt to.” (Page 6.) And what, if, after all, Dr. E. himself believes the very same thing! I am much mistaken if he does not. Let us now fairly make the trial.

I assert,

(1.) That, in some cases, “right opinion is no part of religion;” in other words, there may be right opinion where there is no religion. I instance in the devil. Has he not right opinions? Dr. E. must, perforce, say, Yes. Has he religion? Dr. E. must say, No. Therefore, here right opinion is no part of religion. Thus far, then, Dr. E. himself believes as I do.

(2.) In some cases, “it is a slender part of religion.” Observe, I speak of right opinion, as contra-distinguished both from right tempers and from right words and actions. Of this, I say, “It is a slender part of religion.” And can Dr. E. say otherwise? Surely, no; nor any man living, unless he be brimful of the spirit of contradiction.

“Nay, but I affirm, right tempers cannot subsist without right opinion: The love of God, for instance, cannot subsist without a right opinion of him.” I have never said anything to the contrary: But this is another question. Though right tempers cannot subsist without right opinion, yet right opinion may subsist without right tempers. There may be a right opinion of God, without either love, or one right temper toward him. Satan is a proof of it. All, therefore, that I assert in this matter, Dr. E. must affirm too.

But does it hence follow, that “ignorance and error are as friendly to virtue as just sentiments?” or, that any man may “disbelieve the Bible with perfect innocence or safety?” Does Dr. E. himself think I believe this? I take upon me to say, he does not think so. But why does he talk as if he did? “Because it is a clear consequence from your own assertion.” I answer,

- (1.) If it be, that consequence is as chargeable on Dr. E. as on me; since he must, *nolens volens*, assert the same thing, unless he will dispute through a stone wall.
- (2.) This is no consequence at all: For, admitting “right tempers cannot subsist without right opinions,” you cannot infer, therefore, “right opinions cannot subsist without right tempers.” Prove this by other mediums, if you can; but it will never be proved by this. However, until this is done, I hope to hear no more of this thread-bare objection.

3. Dr. E. attacks me, Secondly, with equal vehemence, on the head of justification. In various parts of his tract, he flatly charges me with holding justification by works. In support of this charge, he cites several sentences out of various treatises, abridgments of which I have occasionally published within these thirty years. As I have not those abridgments by me now, I suppose the citations are fairly made; and that they are exactly made, without any mistake, either designed or undersigned. I will suppose, likewise, that some of these expressions, gleaned up from several tracts, are indefensible. And what is it which any unprejudiced person can infer from this? Will any candid man judge of my sentiments, either on this or any other head, from a few sentences of other men, (though reprinted by me, after premising, that I did not approve of all their expressions,) or from my own avowed, explicit declarations, repeated over and over? Yet this is the way by which Dr. E. proves, that I hold justification by works! He continually cites the words of those authors as mine, telling his reader, “Mr. Wesley says thus and thus.” I do not say so; and no man can prove it, unless by citing my own words. I believe justification by faith alone, as much as I believe there is a God. I declared this in a sermon, preached before the University of Oxford, eight-and twenty years ago. I declared it to all the world eighteen years ago, in a sermon written expressly on the subject. I have never varied from it, not an hair’s breadth, from 1738 to

this day. Is it not strange, then, that, at this time of day, any one should face me down, (yea, and one who has that very volume in his hands, wherein that sermon on justification by faith is contained,) that I hold justification by works? and that, truly, because there are some expressions in some tracts written by other men, but reprinted by me during a course of years, which seem, at least, to countenance that doctrine! Let it suffice, (and it will suffice for every impartial man,) that I absolutely, once for all, renounce every expression which contradicts that fundamental truth, We are justified by faith alone.

“But you have published John Goodwin’s ‘Treatise on Justification.’” I have so; but I have not undertaken to defend every expression which occurs therein. Therefore, none has a right to palm them upon the world as mine. And yet I desire no one will condemn that treatise before he has carefully read it over; and that seriously and carefully; for it can hardly be understood by a slight and cursory reading. And let whoever has read it declare, whether he has not proved every article he asserts, not only by plain express Scripture, but by the authority of the most eminent Reformers. If Dr. E. thinks otherwise, let him confute him; but let no man condemn what he cannot answer.

4. Dr. E. attacks me, Thirdly, on the head of Christian perfection. It is not my design to enter into the merits of the cause. I would only just observe,

- (1.) That the great argument which Dr. E. brings against it is of no force; and,
- (2.) That he misunderstands and misrepresents my sentiments on the subject

First. His great argument against it is of no force. It runs thus: “Paul’s contention with Barnabas is a strong argument against the attainableness of perfection in this life.” (Page 41.) True, if we judge by the bare sound of the English version. But Dr. E. reads the original: **Καὶ ἐγένετο παροξυσμός.** It does not say that sharpness was on both sides. It does not say that all or any part of it was on St. Paul’s side. Neither does the context prove that he was in any fault at all. Indeed, “he thought it not good to take him with them,” who had deserted them before. Now, certainly, there was no blame in this; neither was there any in his

subsequent behavior. For when Barnabas also departed from it, he went on still in the work. "He went through Syria and Cilicia," as he had proposed, "confirming the Churches."

Secondly. He misunderstands and misrepresents my sentiments on the subject. He says, "Mr. Wesley seems to maintain, that sinless perfection is actually attained by every one born of God." (Page 39.)

I do not maintain this; I do not believe it. I believe Christian perfection, or perfect love, (*sinless perfection* is an expression which I do not use or contend for,) is not attained by any of the children of God till they are what the Apostle John terms *fathers*. And this I expressly declare in that very sermon which Dr. E. so largely quotes.

5. Why Dr. E. should quarrel with me concerning natural free will, I cannot conceive, unless for quarrelling's sake. For it is certain, on this head, if no other, we are precisely of one mind. I believe that Adam, before his fall, had such freedom of will, that he might choose either good or evil; but that, since the fall, no child of man has a natural power to choose anything that is truly good. Yet I know (and who does not?) that man has still freedom of will in things of an indifferent nature. Does not Dr. E. agree with me in this? O why should we seek occasion of contention!

6. That Michael Servetus was "one of the wildest Antitrinitarians that ever appeared" is by no means clear. I doubt of it, on the authority of Calvin himself, who certainly was not prejudiced in his favor. For if Calvin does not misquote his words, he was no Antitrinitarian at all. Calvin himself gives a quotation from one of his letters, in which he expressly declares, "I do believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. But I dare not use the word *Trinity* or *Person*." I dare, and I think them very good words. But I should think it very hard to be burned alive for not using them; especially with a slow fire, made of moist, green wood!

I believe Calvin was a great instrument of God; and that he was a wise and pious man: But I cannot but advise those who love his memory to let Servetus alone. Yet if any one resolves to understand the whole affair, he

may see a circumstantial account of it, published some years since, by Dr. Chandler, an eminent Presbyterian Divine in London.

7. Of myself I shall speak a little by and by. But I would now speak of the Methodists, so called, in general. Concerning these, Dr. E. cites the following words, from a little tract, published some years since: — ⁴¹

“We look upon ourselves, not as the authors or ringleaders of a particular sect or party, but as messengers of God to those who are Christians in name, but Heathens in heart and life, to call then back to that from which they are fallen, to real, genuine Christianity. — We look upon the Methodists, not as any particular party, but as living witnesses, in and to every party, of that Christianity which we preach.” (Page 3.)

On this Dr. E. remarks: “If the Methodist Teachers confined themselves to preaching, there might be some room for this plea; but hardly, when they form bands and classes;” that is, when they advise those who are “recalled to real Christianity,” to watch over each other, lest they fall again into the nominal religion, or no religion, that surrounds them. But how does this alter the case? What, if, being jealous, “lest any” of their brethren should again “be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,” they should “exhort one another,” not only weekly, but daily, to cleave to God “with full purpose of heart!” Why might we not plead still, that these are not to “be looked upon as any particular party, but as living witnesses, in and to every party, of that Christianity which we preach?”

What Dr. E. says of the mischievousness of this, and with great plausibility, (page 27,) depends upon an entire mistake, namely, that the Leader of a class acts just like a Romish Priest; and that the inquiries made in a class are of the same kind with those made in auricular confession. It all therefore falls to the ground at once, when it is observed, that there is no resemblance at all, either between the Leader and the Priest, or between the inquiries made by one and by the other.

It is true, that the Leader “sees each person once a week, to inquire how their souls prosper;” and that when they meet, “the Leader or Teacher asks each a few questions relating to the present situation of their minds.”

So then, that questions are actually asked, yea, and inquiries made, cannot be denied. But what kind of questions or inquiries? None that expose the answerer to any danger; none that they would scruple to answer before Dr. E., or any other person that fears God.

8. "But you form a Church within a Church, whose members in South Britain profess to belong to the Church of England, and those in North Britain to the Church of Scotland; while yet they are inspected and governed by Teachers who are sent, continued, or removed by Mr. W." (Page 3.)

All this is, in a certain sense, very true. But let us see what all this amounts to. "You form a Church within a Church;" that is, you raise up and join together witnesses of real Christianity, not among Mahometans and Pagans, but within a Church by law established. Certainly so. And that Church, if she knew her own interest, would see she is much obliged to us for so doing. "But the Methodists in South Britain profess to belong to the Church of England." They profess the truth: For they do belong to it; that is, all who did so before the change was wrought, not in their external mode of worship, but in their tempers and lives. "Nay, but those in Scotland profess to belong to the Church of Scotland." And they likewise profess the truth: For they do belong to it as they did before. And is there any harm in this?

"But they are still inspected by Mr. W. and his Preachers." And they think this both their duty and their privilege; namely, to be still instructed, and built up in faith and love, by those who were the instruments, in God's hand, of bringing them from dead, formal religion, to "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But still those Teachers are so careful, not to withdraw them from the Church to which they belong, not to make any division, that they neither baptize, nor administer the Lord's supper. If I were desirous to form a separate party, I should do both without delay.

9. I come now to add a few words, without any preface or ceremony, concerning myself: —

Dr. E. affirms, First, that I am a very knave; and, Secondly, that I am in a state of damnation. As to the First, he says, "Truth and honesty choose to enter openly and undisguised. 'He that entereth not by the door' of a plain, simple declaration of his sentiments, but insinuates himself by concealing his opinions, 'the same is a thief and a robber.'" (Page 5.) We have more to the same purpose: "Upon mature reflection, I saw no cause to flatter myself, that I could procure from him satisfaction as to what offended me. He had discovered himself no novice in the arts of subtlety and disguise." (Page 24.) Again: "I find little else than that shifting at which Mr. W. is so singularly expert." This is as genteel as to say, "Sir, you lie;" and it is just as strong an argument. It is indeed mere common-place, with which a man fond of such flowers may embellish his page on any occasion.

But what room is there for it on this occasion? By God's help, I will sift this matter thoroughly. And I trust no gentleman or scholar, who weighs what I say, will throw this dirt in my face any more.

For several years I was Moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at Lincoln College, in Oxford. I could not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing; and especially in discerning and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay; and it flew open in a moment. This is the art which I have used with Bishop Warburton, as well as in the preceding pages. When Dr. E. twisted truth and falsehood together, in many of his propositions, it was by this art I untwisted the one from the other, and showed just how far each was true. At doing this, I bless God, I am expert; as those will find who attack me without rhyme or reason. But "shifting, subtlety, and disguise," I despise and abhor, fully as much as Dr. E. And if he cannot see that I have answered Bishop Warburton plainly and directly, and so untwisted his arguments that no man living will be able to piece them together, I believe all unprejudiced men can, and are thoroughly convinced of it.

Let any candid man review the last article, and he will see another instance of this. Dr. E. had given us a long paragraph about “forming a Church within a Church.” It is to the same effect with the objection which the warm Churchmen have often urged against the Dissenters in England. It sounds extremely plausible, and the parts of it are carefully knit together. But it is not a gordian knot: A man moderately expert in arguing may untie it. And when the threads are separate, it plainly appears to have been fine, but not strong.

As to the Second point, I cannot at all complain of Dr. E.’s want of openness. He speaks plain and downright: “Seeming strictness of behavior will not justify those who forget, ‘There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but, the end thereof is the way of death.’” (Page 46.)

Again: “What claim can he have to genuine Christianity, whose professed experience gives God the lie? ‘Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same also?’ It is a deadly charity that flatters men with a persuasion that they are in the way of life, whom the Scripture pronounces in a way of destruction.”

Dr. E.’s charity is of another kind! It is Mr. Sandiman’s charity! It reminds me of the charity of an Antinomian in London; one, I mean, who was newly recovered from that delusion: “Sir,” said she, “last week I would not have been content to kill you, if I could not have damned you too.” I pray God to deliver me from such charity! charity, cruel as the grave!

But what right have I to complain of Dr. E.? He has no obligation to me. My speaking of him everywhere as I have done, was a point of justice, not of friendship. I had only the desire, but not the power, of doing him any kindness. I could not say to him, “Nevertheless thou owest me thine own soul also.” I have it not under Dr. E.’s hand, as I have under Mr. Hervey’s, “Shall I call you my father, or my friend? You have been both to me.” If those related to me by so near, so tender, ties, thus furiously rise up against me, how much more may a stranger, — one of another nation? “O Absalom, my son, my son!”

POSTSCRIPT.

IN his twenty-first page, Dr. E. says, "How far Mr. Wesley's Letter was an answer to anything material in the Preface, the reader will best judge by perusing it." I have annexed it here, that the reader may judge, whether it is not an answer to one very material thing, namely, the charge of "concealing my sentiments," for which Dr. E. condemns me in the keenest manner, and on which very account he makes no scruple to pronounce me "a thief and a robber." I need only premise, that I wrote it not out of fear, (as perhaps Dr. E. thought,) neither in guile; but merely out of love to him, and concern for the cause of God. I desire no favor from him or any opponent: Do me justice, and I ask no more.

EDINBURGH, *April 24, 1765.*

REV. SIR,

BETWEEN thirty and forty years I have had the world upon me, speaking all manner of evil. And I expected no less, as God had called me to testify that its deeds were evil. But the children of God were not upon me; nor did I expect they would. I rather hoped they would take knowledge, that all my designs, and thought, and care, and labor, were directed to this one point, — to advance the kingdom of Christ upon earth. And so many of them did, however differing from me both in opinions and modes of worship. I have the pleasure to mention Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Watts, and Mr. Wardrobe, in particular. How then was I surprised, as well as concerned, that a child of the same Father, a servant of the same Lord, a member of the same family, and (as to the essence of it) a preacher of the same gospel, should, without any provocation that I know of, declare open war against me! I was the more surprised, because you had told me, some months since, that you would favor me with a letter. And had this been done, I make no doubt but you would have received full satisfaction. Instead of this, you ushered into this part of the world one of the most bitter libels that was ever written against me; — written by a dying man, (so far as it was written by poor, well-meaning Mr. Hervey,) with a

trembling hand, just as he was tottering on the margin of the grave. A great warrior resigned his crown, because “there should be some interval,” he said, “between fighting and death.” But Mr. Hervey, who had been a man of peace all his life, began a war not six months before he died. He drew his sword when he was just putting off his body. He then fell on one to whom he had the deepest obligations (as his own letters, which I have now in my hands, testify,) on one who had never intentionally wronged him, who had never spoken an unkind word of him, or to him, and who loved him as his own child. O tell it not in Gath! The good Mr. Harvey, (if these Letters were his) died cursing his spiritual father.

And these Letters another good man, Mr. —, has introduced into Scotland, and warmly recommended. Why have you done this? “Because you have concealed your principles, which is palpable dishonesty.”

When I was first invited into Scotland, (about fourteen years ago,) Mr. Whitefield told me, “You have no business there; for your principles are so well known, that if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night.”

I answered: “If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute; for I will studiously avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any still begin to dispute, they may; but I will not dispute with them.”

I came: Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear. But I was enabled to keep my word. I avoided whatever might engender strife, and insisted upon the grand points, — the religion of the heart, and salvation by faith, — at all times, and in all places. And by this means I have cut off all occasion of dispute, from the first day to this very hour, and this you amazingly improve into a fault; construe into a proof of dishonesty. You likewise charge me with holding unsound principles, and with saying, “Right opinions are (sometimes) no part of religion.”

The last charge I have answered over and over, and very lately to Bishop Warburton. Certainly, had you read that single tract, you would never have repeated that stale objection.

As to my principles, everyone knows, or may know, that I believe the Thirty-first Article of the Church of England. But can none be saved who believe this? I know you will not say so. Meantime, in the main point (justification by faith) I have not wavered a moment for these seven-and-twenty years. And I allow all which Mr. Hervey himself contends for, in his entrance upon the subject, — “Come to Jesus as a needy beggar; hang upon him as a devoted pensioner.” And whoever does this, I will be bold to say, shall not perish everlastingly.

As to your main objection, convince me that it is my duty to preach on controverted subjects, predestination in particular, and I will do it. At present I think it would be a sin. I think it would create still more divisions. And are there not enough already? I have seen a book written by one who styles himself, “*Ecclesiae direptae et gementis Presbyter.*”⁴² Shall I tear *ecclesiam direptam et gementem*?⁴³ God forbid! No; I will, so far as I can, heal her breaches. And if you really love her, (as I doubt not you do,) why should you hinder me from so doing? Has she so many friends and helpers left, that you should strive to lessen their number? Would you wish to turn any of her friends, even though weak and mistaken, into enemies? If you must contend, have you not Arians, Socinians, Seceders, Infidels, to contend with; to say nothing of whoremongers, adulterers, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, common swearers? *O ecclesia gemens!* And will you pass by all these, and single out me to fight with? Nay, but I will not. I do and will fight with all these, but not with you. I cannot; I dare not. You are the son of my Father; my fellow-laborer in the gospel of his dear Son. I love your person; I love your character; I love the work wherein you are engaged. And if you will still shoot at me, (because Mr. Hervey has painted me as a monster,) even with arrows drawn from Bishop Warburton’s quiver, (how unfit for Mr. ——’s hand!) I can only say, as I always did before, The Lord Jesus bless you in your soul, in your body, in your relations, in your work, in whatever tends to his own glory!

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

THE QUESTION, “WHAT IS AN ARMINIAN?” ANSWERED.

BY A LOVER OF FREE GRACE.

1. To say, “This man is an Arminian,” has the same effect on many hearers, as to say, “This is a mad dog.” It puts them into a fright at once: They run away from him with all speed and diligence; and will hardly stop, unless it be to throw a stone at the dreadful and mischievous animal.

2. The more unintelligible the word is, the better it answers the purpose. Those on whom it is fixed know not what; to do: Not understanding what it means, they cannot tell what defense to make, or how to clear themselves from the charge. And it is not easy to remove the prejudice which others have imbibed, who know no more of it, than that it is “something *very* bad,” if not “*all* that is bad!”

3. To clear the meaning, therefore, of this ambiguous term, may be of use to many: To those who so freely pin this name upon others, that they may not say what they do not understand; to those that hear them, that they may be no longer abused by men saying they know not what; and to those upon whom the name is fixed, that they may know how to answer for themselves.

4. It may be necessary to observe, First, that many confound Arminians with Arians. But this is entirely a different thing; the one has no resemblance to the other. An Arian is one who denies the Godhead of Christ; we scarce need say, the supreme, eternal Godhead; because there

can be no God but the supreme, eternal God, unless we will make two Gods, a great God and a little one. Now, none have ever more firmly believed, or more strongly asserted, the Godhead of Christ, than many of the (so called) Arminians have done; yea, and do at this day. Arminianism therefore (whatever it be) is totally different from Arianism.

5. The rise of the word was this: JAMES HARMENS, in Latin, *Jacobus Arminius*, was first one of the Ministers of Amsterdam, and afterwards Professor of Divinity at Leyden. He was educated at Geneva; but in the year 1591 began to doubt of the principles which he had till then received. And being more and more convinced that they were wrong, when he was vested with the Professorship, he publicly taught what he believed the truth, till, in the year 1609, he died in peace. But a few years after his death, some zealous men, with the Prince of Orange at their head, furiously assaulted all that held what were called his opinions; and having procured them to be solemnly condemned, in the famous Synod of Dort, (not so numerous or learned, but full as impartial, as the Council or Synod of Trent,) some were put to death, some banished, some imprisoned for life, all turned out of their employments, and made incapable of holding any office, either in Church or State.

6. The errors charged upon these (usually termed *Arminians*) by their opponents, are five:

- (1.) That they deny original sin;
- (2.) That they deny justification by faith;
- (3.) That they deny absolute predestination;
- (4.) That they deny the grace of God to be irresistible; and,
- (5.) That they affirm, a believer may fall from grace.

With regard to the two first of these charges, they plead, Not Guilty. They are entirely false. No man that ever lived, not John Calvin himself; ever asserted either original sin, or justification by faith, in more strong, more clear and express terms, than Arminius has done. These two points, therefore, are to be set out of the question: In these both parties agree. In this respect, there is not a hair's breadth difference between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.

7. But there is an undeniable difference between the Calvinists and Arminians, with regard to the three other questions. Here they divide; the former believe absolute, the latter only conditional, predestination. The Calvinists hold,

(1.) God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, to save such and such persons, and no others; and that Christ died for these, and none else. The Arminians hold, God has decreed, from all eternity, touching all that have the written word, "He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be condemned:" And in order to this, "Christ died for all, all that were dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, for every child of Adam, since "in Adam all died."

8. The Calvinists hold, Secondly, that the saving grace of God is absolutely irresistible; that no man is any more able to resist it, than to resist the stroke of lightning. The Arminians hold, that although there may be some moments wherein the grace of God acts irresistibly, yet, in general, any man may resist, and that to his eternal ruin, the grace whereby it was the will of God he should have been eternally saved.

9. The Calvinists hold, Thirdly, that a true believer in Christ cannot possibly fall from grace. The Arminians hold, that a true believer may "make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;" that he may fall, not only foully, but finally, so as to perish forever.

10. Indeed, the two latter points, irresistible grace and infallible perseverance, are the natural consequence of the former, of the unconditional decree. For if God has eternally and absolutely decreed to save such and such persons, it follows, both that they cannot resist his saving grace, (else they might miss of salvation,) and that they cannot finally fall from that grace which they cannot resist. So that, in effect, the three questions come into one, "Is predestination absolute or conditional?" The Arminians believe, it is conditional; the Calvinists, that it is absolute.

11. Away, then, with all ambiguity! Away with all expressions which only puzzle the cause! Let honest men speak out, and not play with hard words which they do not understand. And how can any man know what Arminius held, who has never read one page of his writings? Let no man

bawl against Arminians, till he knows what the term means; and then he will know that Arminians and Calvinists are just upon a level. And Arminians have as much right to be angry at Calvinists, as Calvinists have to be angry at Arminians. John Calvin was a pious, learned, sensible man; and so was James Harmens. Many Calvinists are pious, learned, sensible men; and so are many Arminians. Only the former hold absolute predestination; the latter, conditional.

12. One word more: Is it not the duty of every Arminian Preacher, First, never, in public or in private, to use the word *Calvinist* as a term of reproach; seeing it is neither better nor worse than calling names? — a practice no more consistent with good sense or good manners, than it is with Christianity. Secondly. To do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly of it? And is it not equally the duty of every Calvinist Preacher, First, never in public or in private, in preaching or in conversation, to use the word *Arminian* as a term of reproach? Secondly. To do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly thereof; and that the more earnestly and diligently, if they have been accustomed so to do? perhaps encouraged therein by his own example!

THOUGHTS UPON GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

GOD reveals himself under a two-fold character; as a Creator, and as Governor. These are no way inconsistent with each other; but they are totally different.

As a Creator, he has acted, in all things, according to his own sovereign will. Justice has not, cannot have, any place here; for nothing is due to what has no being. Here, therefore, he may, in the most absolute sense, do what he will with his own. Accordingly, he created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein, in every conceivable respect, "according to his own good pleasure."

1. He began his creation at what time, or rather, at what part of eternity, it seemed him good. Had it pleased him, it might have been millions of years sooner, or millions of ages later.
2. He determined, by his sovereign will, the duration of the universe; whether it should last seven thousand, or seven hundred thousand or numberless millions of years.
3. By the same, he appointed the place of the universe, in the immensity of space.
4. Of his sovereign will he determined the number of the stars, of all the component parts of the universe, and the magnitude of every atom, of every fixed star, every planet, and every comet.
5. As Sovereign, he created the earth, with all the furniture of it, whether animate or inanimate; and gave to each such a nature, with such properties.

6. Of his own good pleasure, he made such a creature as man, an embodied spirit, and, in consequence of his spiritual nature, endued with understanding, will, and liberty.

7. He hath determined the times for every nation to come into being, with the bounds of their habitation.

8. He has allotted the time, the place, the circumstances, for the birth of each individual: —

If of parents I came
That honor'd thy name,
'Twas thy goodness appointed it so.

9. He has given to each a body, as it pleased him, weak or strong, healthy or sickly. This implies,

10. That he gives them various degrees of understanding, and of knowledge, diversified by numberless circumstances. It is hard to say how far this extends; what an amazing difference there is, as to the means of improvement, between one born and brought up in a pious English family, and one born and bred among the Hottentots. Only we are sure the difference cannot be so great, as to necessitate one to be good, or the other to be evil; to force one into everlasting glory, or the other into everlasting burnings. This cannot be, because it would suppose the character of God as a Creator, to interfere with God as a Governor; wherein he does not, cannot possibly, act according to his own mere sovereign will; but, as he has expressly told us, according to the invariable rules both of justice and mercy.

Whether therefore we can account for it or no, (which indeed we cannot in a thousand cases,) we must absolutely maintain, that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. But he cannot reward the sun for shining, because the sun is not a free agent. Neither could he reward us, for letting our light shine before men, if we acted as necessarily as the sun. All reward, as well as all punishment, pre-supposes free-agency; and whatever creature is incapable of choice, is incapable of either one or the other.

Whenever, therefore, God acts as a Governor, as a rewarder, or punisher, he no longer acts as a mere Sovereign, by his own sole will and pleasure; but as an impartial Judge, guided in all things by invariable justice.

Yet it is true, that, in some cases, mercy rejoices over justice; although severity never does. God may reward more, but he will never punish more, than strict justice requires. It may be allowed that God acts as Sovereign in convincing some souls of sin; arresting them in their mid career, by his resistless power. It seems also, that, at the moment of our conversion, he acts irresistibly. There may likewise be many irresistible touches during the course of our Christian warfare; with regard to which every believer may say,

“In the time of my distress

Thou hast my succor been,

In my utter helplessness

Restraining me from sin.”

But still, as St. Paul might have been either obedient or “disobedient to the heavenly vision,” so every individual may, after all that God has done, either improve his grace, or make it of none effect.

Whatever, therefore, it hath pleased God to do, of his sovereign pleasure, as Creator of heaven and earth; and whatever his mercy may do on particular occasions, over and above what justice requires; the general rule stands firm as the pillars of heaven: “The Judge of all the earth will do right. He will judge the world in righteousness,” and every man therein, according to the strictest justice. He will punish no man for doing anything which he could not possibly avoid; neither for omitting anything which he could not possibly do. Every punishment supposes the offender might have avoided the offense for which he is punished: Otherwise, to punish him would be palpably unjust, and inconsistent with the character of God our Governor.

Let then these two ideas of God the Creator, the sovereign Creator, and God the Governor, the just Governor, be always kept apart. Let us distinguish them from each other, with the utmost care. So shall we give God the full glory of his sovereign grace, without impeaching his inviolable justice.

A BLOW AT THE ROOT;

OR,

CHRIST STABBED IN THE HOUSE OF HIS FRIENDS.

Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss? — Luke 22:48.

1. “**W**ITHOUT holiness no man shall see the Lord,” shall see the face of God in glory. Nothing under heaven can be more sure than this; “for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And though heaven and earth pass away, yet his word shall not pass away.” As well therefore might God fall from heaven, as his word fall to the ground. No, it cannot be; none shall live with God, but he that now lives to God; none shall enjoy the glory of God in heaven, but he that bears the image of God on earth; none that is not saved from sin here can be saved from hell hereafter; none can see the kingdom of God above, unless the kingdom of God be in him below. Whosoever will reign with Christ in heaven, must have Christ reigning in him on earth. He must have “that mind in him which was in Christ,” enabling him “to walk as Christ also walked.”

2. And yet as sure as this is, and as clearly as it is taught in every part of the Holy Scripture, there is scarce one among all the truths of God, which is less received by men. It was indeed acknowledged in some degree, even among the wiser Heathens. Some among them allowed, that nothing would please God, but the *sancti recessus mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto*; “a virtuous, holy mind, and an heart deep-dyed with generous honesty.” But though they could not deny, yet how easily and effectually did they evade this! They fancied something else would do as well; that some rites or ceremonies, some external forms, or glorious actions, would

supply the place of inward holiness. So the famous Roman entitles to future happiness, not only the good and virtuous, but all

*Ob patriam pugando vulnera passos,
Quique pii vates, et Phaebo digna locuti;
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.* 44

So, to fight for their country, to write good verses, or to invent useful arts, was abundantly sufficient, in the judgment of the wisest Heathens, to give men a place in heaven!

3. But this would not pass with modern Romans. They despised such gross imaginations. But though they did not allow these, they found out another way to get to heaven without holiness. In the room of them they substituted penances, pilgrimages, praying to saints and angels; and, above all these, masses for the dead, absolution by a Priest, and extreme unction. And these satisfy the Romanists full as well as lustrations did the Heathens. Thousands of them make no manner of doubt, but, by a diligent use of these, without any holiness at all, they shall see the Lord in glory.

4. However, Protestants will not be satisfied thus; they know this hope is no better than a spider's web. They are convinced, that whoever leans on this, leans on the staff of a broken reed. What then can they do? How shall they hope to see God, without holiness? Why, by doing no harm, doing good, going to the church and sacrament. And many thousands sit down content with this, believing they are in the high road to heaven.

5. Yet many cannot rest here. They look upon this as the very Popery of Protestantism. They well know, that although none can be a real Christian, without carefully abstaining from all evil, using every means of grace at every opportunity, and doing all possible good to all men; yet a man may go thus far, may do all this, and be but an Heathen still. They know this religion is too superficial; it is but as it were skin-deep. Therefore, it is not Christianity; for that lies in the heart; it is worshipping God in spirit and in truth; it is no other than "the kingdom of God within us;" it is the life of God in the son of man; it is the mind which was in Christ Jesus; it is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

6. Besides, they see that, be this religion shallower or deeper, it does not stand on the right foundation; since “other foundation” for true religion “can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus;” since no one can have the mind which was in Christ, till he is justified by his blood, till he is forgiven and reconciled to God through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. And none can be justified, they are well assured, but by faith, even faith alone; seeing “to him” Only “that believeth on God who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.”

7. What evasion now? What way could Satan take to make all this light of none effect? What could be done when that grand truth, “By grace ye are saved through faith,” was more and more generally received? What, indeed, but to persuade the very men who had received it, to “turn the grace of God into lasciviousness?” To this end Simon Magus appeared again, and taught, “that Christ had done, as well as suffered, all; that his righteousness being imputed to us, we need none of our own; that seeing there was so much righteousness and holiness in him, there needs none in us; that to think we have any, or to desire or seek any, is to renounce Christ; that from the beginning to the end of salvation, all is in Christ, nothing in man; and that those who teach otherwise are legal Preachers, and know nothing of the gospel.”

8. This is indeed “a blow at the root,” the root of all holiness, all true religion. Hereby Christ is “stabbed in the house of his friends,” of those who make the largest professions of loving and honoring him; the whole design of his death, namely, “to destroy the works of the devil,” being overthrown at a stroke. For wherever this doctrine is cordially received, it leaves no place for holiness. It demolishes it from top to bottom; it destroys both root and branch. It effectually tears up all desire of it, all endeavor after it. It forbids all such exhortations as might excite those desires, or awaken those endeavors. Nay, it makes men afraid of personal holiness, afraid of cherishing any thought of it, or motion toward it, lest they should deny the faith, and reject Christ and his righteousness: So that, instead of being “zealous of good works,” they are a stink in their nostrils. And they are infinitely more afraid of “the works of God,” than of “the works of the devil.”

9. Here is wisdom! though not the wisdom of the saints, but wisdom from beneath. Here is the masterpiece of Satan: Farther than this he cannot go. Men are holy, without a grain of holiness in them! holy in Christ, however unholy in themselves; they are in Christ, without one jot of the mind that was in Christ; in Christ, though their nature is whole in them. They are “complete in him,” though they are, in themselves, as proud, as vain, as covetous, as passionate as ever. It is enough: They may be unrighteous still, seeing Christ has “fulfilled all righteousness.”

10. “O ye simple ones, how long will ye love simplicity?” How long will we “seek death in the error of your life?” “Know ye not,” whoever teacheth you otherwise, “that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” “Be not deceived; “although there are many lie in wait to deceive, and that under the fair pretense of exalting Christ; — a pretense which the more easily steals upon you, because “to you he is precious.” But as the Lord liveth, “neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” “Such” indeed “were some of you. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified,” as well as “justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” You are really changed; you are not only accounted, but actually “made, righteous.” “The law” — the in and power — “of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made” you “free” — really, actually free — “from the law” or power “of sin and death.” This is liberty, true gospel liberty, experienced by every believer: Not freedom from the law of God, or the works of God, but from the law of sin and the works of the devil. See that ye “stand fast in” this real, not imaginary “liberty, wherewith Christ hath made you free.” And take heed ye “be not entangled again,” by means of these vain boasters, “in the yoke of” that vile “bondage to sin,” from which ye are now clean escaped. I testify unto you, that if you still continue in sin, Christ shall profit you nothing; that Christ is no Savior to you, unless he saves you from your sins; and that unless it purify your heart, faith shall profit you nothing. O when will ye understand, that to oppose either inward or outward holiness, under color of exalting Christ, is directly to act the part of Judas, to “betray the Son of man with a kiss?” Repent, repent! lest he cut you in sunder with the two-edged sword that

cometh out of his mouth! It is you yourselves that, by opposing the very end of his coming into the world, are crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame. It is you that, by expecting to see the Lord without holiness, though the righteousness of Christ, “make the blood of the covenant an unholy thing,” keeping those unholy that so trust in it. O beware! for evil is before you. If those who name not the name of Christ, and die in their sins, shall be punished seven-fold, surely you who thus make Christ a minister of sin, shall be punished seventy-and-seven fold. What; make Christ destroy his own kingdom? make Christ a factor for Satan? set Christ against holiness? talk of Christ as saving his people in their sins? It is no better than to say, He saves them from the guilt, and not from the power, of sin. Will you make the righteousness of Christ such a cover for the unrighteousness of man? So that by this means, “the unrighteous” of every kind “shall inherit the kingdom of God!” Stop! Consider! What are you doing? You did run well: Who hath bewitched you? Who hath corrupted you from the simplicity of Christ, from the purity of the gospel? You did know, “He that believeth is born of God: And whosoever is born of God sinneth not;” but while “he keepeth himself, that wicked one toucheth him not.” O come back to the true, the pure, the old gospel! that which ye received in the beginning. Come back to Christ, who died to make you an holy people, “zealous of good works.” “Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do the first works.” Your “Father worketh hitherto:” Do ye work; else your faith is vain. For “wilt thou know, O vain,” O empty “man, that faith without works is dead?” Wilt thou know that “though I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing?” Wilt thou know, that all the blood and righteousness of Christ, unless “that mind be in thee which was in Him,” and thou likewise “walk as Christ walked,” will only increase thy damnation? “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about strife of words, whereof come railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth.” Be no longer afraid of the strongest exhortations either to inward or outward holiness. Hereby God the Father is glorified, and God the Son truly exalted. Do not stupidly and senselessly call this *legal*, — a silly, unmeaning word. Be not afraid of being “under the law of God,” but of being under “the law of sin.” Love the strictest preaching

best; that which most searches the heart, and shows you wherein you are unlike Christ; and that which presses you most to love him with all your heart, and serve him with all your strength.

11. Suffer me to warn you of another silly, unmeaning word: Do not say, "I can do nothing." If so, then you know nothing of Christ; then you have no faith: For if you have, if you believe, then you "can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth you." You can love him and keep his commandments; and to you his "commandments are not grievous." *Grievous to them that believe!* Far from it. They are the joy of your heart. Show then your love to Christ by keeping his commandments, by walking in all his ordinances blameless. Honor Christ by obeying him with all your might, by serving him with all your strength. Glorify Christ by imitating Christ in all things, by walking as he walked. Keep to Christ by keeping in all his ways. Trust in Christ, to live and reign in your heart. Have confidence in Christ that he will fulfill in you all his great and precious promises, that he will work in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and all the work of faith with power. Cleave to Christ, till his blood have cleansed you from all pride, all anger, all evil desire. Let Christ do all. Let him that has done all for you, do all in you. Exalt Christ as a Prince to give repentance; a Savior both to give remission of sins, and to create in you a new heart, to renew a right spirit within you. This is the gospel, the pure, genuine gospel; glad tidings of great salvation. Not the new, but the old, the everlasting gospel, the gospel not of Simon Magus, but of Jesus Christ. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ give you, "according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that, being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height; and to know that love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God!"

THE CONSEQUENCE PROVED.

1. MR. TOPLADY, a young, bold man, lately published a pamphlet, an extract from which was soon after printed, concluding with these words:

“The sum of all is this: One in twenty, suppose, of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will: The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.”

2. A great outcry has been raised on that account, as though this was not a fair state of the case; and it has been vehemently affirmed, that no such consequence follows from the doctrine of absolute predestination.

I calmly affirm, it is a fair state of the case; this consequence does naturally and necessarily follow from the doctrine of absolute predestination, as here stated and defended by bold Mr. Augustus Toplady.

Indeed, I have not leisure to consider the matter at large: I can only make a few strictures, and leave the young man to be farther corrected by one that is full his match, Mr. Thomas Olivers.

3. “When love is predicated of God, it implies, (1.) His everlasting will, purpose, and determination to save his people.” (*Mr. Toplady’s Tract*, chap. 1.) I appeal to all men, whether it is not a natural consequence, even of this, that “all these shall be saved, do what they will.”

You may say, “O, but they will only do what is good.” Be it so: Yet the consequence stands.

“Election signifies that sovereign, unconditional, immutable act of God, whereby he selected some to be eternally saved.” *Immutable, unconditional!* From hence then it undeniably follows, “these shall be saved, do what they will.”

“Predestination, as relating to the elect, is that irreversible act of the divine will, whereby God determined to deliver a certain number of men from hell.” *Ergo*, a certain number shall infallibly be saved, do what they will. Who can deny the consequence?

“Not one of the elect can perish, but they must all necessarily be saved.” (Chap. 3.) Can any assert this, and yet deny that consequence, — “therefore all the elect shall be saved, do what they will?” unless you would say, it is the proposition itself, rather than a consequence from it.

4. So much for the former part of the question: Let us now consider the latter: —

“Hatred ascribed to God implies a resolution not to have mercy on such and such men. So, ‘Esau have I hated;’ that is, I did from all eternity determine not to have mercy on him.” (Chap. 1.) In other words, —

I by my dire decree did seal
His fix’d, unalterable doom;
Consign’d his unborn soul to hell,
And damn’d him from his mother’s womb.

Well, then, does it not follow, by unavoidable consequence, that such and such men, poor hated Esau in particular, “shall be damned, do what they can?”

“Reprobation denotes God’s eternal preterition of some men, and his predestination of them to destruction.” And is it possible for them, by anything they can do, to prevent that destruction? You say, “No.” It follows, they “shall be damned, do what they can.”

“Predestination, as it regards the reprobate, is that immutable act of God’s will, whereby he hath determined to leave some men to perish.” And can

they avoid it by anything, they do? You affirm, they cannot. Again, therefore, it follows, these “shall be damned, do what they can.”

“We assert, there is a predestination of particular persons to death, which death they shall inevitably undergo;” that is, “they shall be damned, do what they can.”

“The non-elect were predestinated to eternal death.” (Chap. 2.) *Ergo*, “they shall be damned, do what they can.”

“The condemnation of the reprobate is necessary and inevitable.” Surely I need add no more on this head. You see that, “The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can,” is the whole burden of the song.

5. Take only two precious sentences more, which include the whole question: —

“We assert, that the number of the elect, and also of the reprobate, is so fixed and determinate, that neither can be augmented or diminished;” (chap. 4;) and “that the decrees of election and reprobation are immutable and irreversible.”

From each of these assertions, the whole consequence follows, clear as the noonday sun, — Therefore, “the elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.”

6. I add a word, with regard to another branch of this kind, charitable doctrine.

Mr. Toplady says, “God has a positive will to destroy the reprobate for their sins.” (Chap. 1.) *For their sins!* How can that be? I positively assert, that (on this scheme) they have no sins at all. They never had; they can have none. For it cannot be a sin in a spark to rise, or in a stone to fall. And the spark or the stone is not more necessarily determined either to rise or to fall, than the man is to sin, to commit that rape, or adultery, or murder. For “God did, before all time, determine and direct to some particular end, every person or thing, to which he has given, or is yet to

give, being.” God himself did “predestinate them to fill up the measure of their iniquities;” such was his sovereign, irresistible decree, before the foundation of the world. To fill up the measure of their iniquities; that is, to commit every act which they committed. So “God decreed the Jews to be the crucifiers of Christ, and Judas to betray him.” (Chap. 4.) Whose fault was it then? You plainly say, It was not his fault, but God’s. For what was Judas, or ten thousand reprobates besides? Could they resist his decree? No more than they could pull the sun out of the firmament of heaven. And would God punish them with everlasting destruction, for not pulling the sun out of the firmament? He might as well do it for this, as for their not doing what (on this supposition) was equally impossible. “But they are punished for their impenitency, sin, and unbelief.” Say *unbelief and impenitency*, but not *sin*. For “God had predestinated them to continue in impenitency and unbelief. God had positively ordained them to continue in their blindness and hardness of heart.” Therefore their not repenting and believing was no more a sin, than their not pulling the sun from heaven.

7. Indeed Mr. T. himself owns, “The sins of the reprobate were not the cause of their being passed by; but merely and entirely the sovereign will and determining pleasure of God.”

“O, but their sin was the cause of their damnation, though not of their preterition;” that is, God determined they should live and die in their sins, that he might afterwards damn them!

Was ever anything like this? Yes, I have read something like it: When Tiberius had determined to destroy Sejanus and all his family, as it was unlawful to put a virgin to death, what could be done with his daughter, a child of nine years old? Why, the hangman was ordered first to deflour, and then to strangle, her! Yet even good Tiberius did not order her to be strangled “because she had been defloured!” If so, it had been a parallel case; it had been just what is here affirmed of the Most High.

8. One word more: “I will obviate,” says Mr. T., “a fallacious objection, How is reprobation reconcilable with the doctrine of a future judgment? There needs no pains to reconcile these two.” No pains! Indeed there does;

more pains than all the men upon earth, or all the devils in hell, will ever be able to take. But go on: "In the last day, Christ will pass sentence on the non-elect,

- (1.) Not for having done what they could not help; but,
- (2.) For their willful ignorance of divine things;
- (3.) For their obstinate unbelief;
- (4.) For their omissions of moral duty; and,
- (5.) For their repeated iniquities and transgressions."

He will condemn them,

- (1.) "Not for having done what they could not help." I say, Yes; for having sinned against God to their lives' end. But this they could not help. He had himself decreed it; he had determined they should continue impenitent.
- (2.) "For their willful ignorance of divine things." No; their ignorance of God, and the things of God, was not willful, was not originally owing to their own will, but to the sovereign will of God; his will, not theirs, was the primary cause of their continuing in that ignorance.
- (3.) "For their obstinate unbelief." No; how can it be termed obstinate, when they never had a possibility of removing it? when God had absolutely decreed, before they were born, that they should live and die therein?
- (4.) "For their omissions of moral duty;" that is, for not loving God and their neighbor, which is the sum of the moral law. Was it then ever in their power to love God and their neighbor? No; no more than to touch heaven with their hand. Had not God himself unalterably decreed, that they should not love either God or man? If, therefore, they are condemned for this, they are condemned for what they never could help.
- (5.) "For their repeated iniquities and transgressions." And was it ever in their power to help these? Were they not predestinated thereto before the foundation of the world? How then can the Judge of all the earth consign them to everlasting fire, for what was in effect his own act and deed?

I apprehend, then, this is no fallacious objection, but a solid and weighty one; and defy any man living, who asserts the unconditional decree of reprobation or preterition, (just the same in effect,) to reconcile this with the scriptural doctrine of a future judgment. I say again, I defy any man on earth to show, how, on this scheme, God can “judge the world in righteousness.”

SOME REMARKS

ON

MR. HILL'S "REVIEW OF ALL THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY MR. JOHN WESLEY."

Humanum est nescire et errare.

Be calm in arguing for fierceness makes
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.
Why should I feel another man's mistakes
More than his sickness or infirmity?
In love I should; but anger is not love,
Nor wisdom neither; therefore gently move.

HERBERT.

1. MR. HILL has an immense advantage over me: He abounds in time, and I in business. I cannot therefore undertake to write page for page; I have not leisure, if I had inclination. And indeed it is not needful: For a full confutation of whatsoever is cited from the Eleven Letters commonly ascribed to Mr. Hervey, I need only refer to Mr. Sellon; who has not only answered every shadow of an argument contained in that poor piece of low invective, but even the reproaches; which indeed he could not pass over, without passing over great part of the book. If Mr. H. is afraid to read that answer, I am sorry for it. And for whatever he advances on particular redemption, or any of the points connected therewith, I refer everyone who is not afraid of the light, to those three tracts of Mr. Sellon, — "The Arguments against General Redemption answered," "God's Sovereignty vindicated against Elisha Coles," and "The Church of England vindicated from the Charge of Calvinism." I believe, if Mr. Hill had given

this last a fair reading, he would know the Seventeenth Article is nothing to his purpose.

2. With regard to his objections to Mr. Fletcher, I refer all candid men to his own writings; his Letters, entitled, “A First, Second, and Third Check to Antinomianism;” the rather, because there are very few of his arguments which Mr. H. even attempts to answer. It is true, he promises “a full and particular answer to Mr. F.’s ‘Second Check to Antinomianism.’” But it will puzzle anyone to find where that answer is, except in the title page. And if anything more is needful to be done, Mr. F. is still able to answer for himself. But if he does, I would recommend to his consideration the advice formerly given by a wise man to his friend: “See that you humble not yourself to that man; it would hurt both him and the cause of God.” It is pity but he had considered it sooner, and he might have escaped some keen reflections. But he did not; he imagined, when he spoke or wrote in the simplicity of his heart, that his opponents would have received his words in the same spirit wherein they were spoken. No such matter; they turn them all into poison; he not only loses his sweet words, but they are turned into bitterness, are interpreted as mere sneer and sarcasm! A good lesson for me I had designed to have transcribed Mr. F.’s character of Mr. H., and to have added a little thereto, in hope of softening his spirit: But I see it is in vain; as well might one hope to soften

Inexorable Pluto, king of shades!

Since he is capable of putting such a construction, even upon Mr. F.’s gentleness and mildness; since he ascribes even to him “a pen dipped in gall,” what will he not ascribe to me? I have done, therefore, with humbling myself to these men, to Mr. H. and his associates. I have humbled myself to them for these thirty years; but will do it no more. I have done with attempting to soften their spirits; it is all lost labor. Upon men of an ingenuous temper I have been able to fix an obligation. Bishop Gibson, Dr. Church, and even Dr. Taylor, were obliged to me for not pushing my advantage. But it is not so with these: Whatever mercy you show, you are to expect no mercy from them. *Mercy* did I say? Alas! I expect no justice; no more than I have found already. As they have wrested and distorted

my words from the beginning, so I expect they will do to the end. Mr. H.'s performance is a specimen. Such mercy, such justice, I am to expect!

3. And does Mr. H. complain of the unhappy Spirit in which Mr. F. writes? Many writers have done marvelously; but thou excellest them all! For forty or fifty years I have been a little acquainted with controversial writers; some of the Romish persuasion, some of our own Church, some Dissenters of various denominations: And I have found many among them as angry as him; but one so bitter I have not found: Or one only, the author of those "excellent Letters," as Mr. H. styles them; which he particularly "admires," (that is his word,) and the "whole spirit" of which he has drank in. This is his peculiar character, his distinguishing grace: As a writer, his name is Wormwood. Accordingly, he charges Mr. F. with a "severe, acrimonious spirit," with "sneer, sarcasm, and banter," yea, with "notorious falsehoods, calumny, and gross perversions." (Page 2.) Nay, "I accuse you," says he, "of the grossest perversions and misrepresentations that ever proceeded from any author's pen." In the same spirit he is represented as "a slanderer of God's people and Ministers, descending to the meanest quibbles, with a bitter, railing, acrimonious spirit;" (page 21) and, page 27, to go no farther, as "using stratagem and ungenerous artifices:" Although "I have treated you," says Mr. H., "with all the politeness of a gentleman, and the humility of a Christian." Amazing! And has he not treated me so too? At present, take but one or two instances: "Forgeries have long passed for no crime with Mr. Wesley." (Page 27.) "He administers falsehoods and damnable heresies, rank poison, hemlock, and ratsbane. We cannot allow him any other title than that of an empiric or quack-doctor." (Page 29.) Which shall we admire most here, — the gentleman or the Christian?

4. There is something extremely odd in this whole affair. A man falls upon another, and gives him a good beating; who, in order to be revenged, does not grapple with him, (perhaps sensible that he is above his match,) but, giving him two or three kicks, falls upon a third man that was standing by. "O," says he, "but I know that fellow well; he is the second of him than beat me." — "If he is, dispatch your business with the former first, and then turn to him." However, if Mr. H. is resolved to fall upon me, I must defend myself as well as I can.

5. From the spirit and manner wherein he writes, let us now proceed to the matter. But that is so various, and scattered up and down for an hundred and fifty pages, without much order or connection, that it is difficult to know where to begin. However, all tends to one point; the good design of the writer is, to blacken. With this laudable view, he observes the old rule, "Throw dirt enough, and some will stick;" Knowing that the mud may be thrown in a trice; but it will take time and pains to scrape it off. Indeed, he takes true pains to fasten it on; to represent Mr. W. as a knave and a fool; a man of no conscience, and no understanding. It is true, the latter is insisted on most at large: By an hundred instances Mr. H. has made it plain to all the world, that Mr. W. never had three grains of common sense; that he is the veriest weathercock that ever was; that he has not wit enough to be fixed in anything, but is "tossed to and fro continually;" "that he is to this very moment so absolutely unsettled with regard to every fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that no two disputants in the Schools can be more opposite to each other than he is to himself"

6. But some may naturally ask, "What is the matter? What makes Mr. H. so warm? What has Mr. W. done, that this gentleman, this Christian, *ita gladiatorio animo ad eum affectat viam?*"⁴⁵ that he falls upon him thus outrageously, dagger out of sheath, without either rhyme or reason?" "O, the matter is plain. Beside that he is Mr. F.'s friend, he is an Arminian; and nothing is bad enough for an Arminian." "An Arminian! What is that?" "I cannot tell exactly; but to be sure it is all that is bad. For a Popish friar, a Benedictine monk, bears witness, (and Mr. H. avers the same,) that the tenets of the Church of Rome are nearer by half to Calvinism than to Arminianism; nearer by half to Mr. H.'s tenets than to Mr. W.'s." "Truly, I always thought so. But still I ask, What is an Arminian?" "Why, in other words, an election-doubter." And the "good old Preacher," says Mr. H., "places all election-doubters" (that is, those who are not clear in the belief of absolute predestination) "among the numerous host of the Diabolonians. One of these being brought before the Judge, the Judge tells him, 'To question election is to overthrow a great doctrine of the gospel: Therefore he, the election-doubter, must die.'" (Page 37.) That is, plainly, he must die eternally for this damnable sin. The very same thing Mr. H. affirms elsewhere: "The only cement of Christian union is the love of God;

and the foundation of that love must be laid in believing the truths of God;" (that is, you must believe particular redemption, or it is impossible you should love God;) for, to use "the words of Dr. Owen, in his 'Display of Arminianism,'" (see the truths which Mr. H. means,) "'an agreement without truth is no peace, but a covenant with death, and a conspiracy against the kingdom of Christ.'" (Page 39.)

7. I am sorry Mr. H. should think so. But so long as he remains in that sentiment, what peace am I or Mr. F., or indeed any Arminian, to expect from him? since any agreement with us would be "a covenant with death, and a conspiracy against the kingdom of Christ." I therefore give up all hope of peace with him, and with all that are thus minded. For I do not believe what he terms "the truths of God," the doctrine of absolute predestination. I never did believe it, nor the doctrines connected with it, no, not for an hour. In this, at least, I have been consistent with myself. I have never varied an hair's breadth; I cannot while I believe the Bible, while I believe either the Old or New Testament. What I do believe, and always have believed in this matter, I will declare with all simplicity.

"(1.) I believe no decree of reprobation. I do not believe the Father of spirits ever

Consign'd one unborn soul to hell,
Or damn'd him from his mother's womb.

"(2.) I believe no decree of preterition, which is only reprobation whitewashed. I do not believe God ever sent one man into the world, to whom he had decreed never to give that grace whereby alone he could escape damnation.

"(3.) I do not believe (what is only preterition or reprobation in other words) any such absolute election, as implies that all but the absolutely elect shall inevitably be damned.

"(4.) I do not believe the doctrine of irresistible grace, or of infallible perseverance; because both the one and the other implies that election which cannot stand without preterition or reprobation.

“(5.) I do not believe salvation by works. Yet if any man can prove (what I judge none ever did, or ever will) that there is no medium between this and absolute predestination; I will rather subscribe to this than to that, as far less absurd of the two.”

8. *Hinc illae lachrymae.* Here is the source of Mr. H.’s implacable hatred to me. And hence arises his vehement displeasure at those “Minutes,” which Mr. Sh—— and he style “dreadful heresy.” The appellation is just, suppose (as Mr. H. asserts) all election-doubters are Diabolonians; suppose no man who is “not clear in the belief of absolute predestination” can love either God or his neighbor. For it is certain, the doctrine of the Minutes and of the decrees cannot stand together. If the doctrine of the decrees stands, then that of the Minutes must fall; for we willingly allow, that the one is incompatible with the other. If the doctrine of the Minutes stands, then that of the decrees must fall. For it is manifest, this, particularly the last article, strikes at the very root of Calvinism. Of what consequence is it, then, to one who is persuaded, the belief of Calvinism is essential to salvation, to expose those Minutes to the uttermost, as well as any that dares to defend them?

9. In order to this good end, Mr. H. publishes “A Review of all the Doctrines taught by Mr. John Wesley.” But is it possible for any man to do this without reading all the writings that I have published? It is not possible in the nature of things; he cannot give an account of what he never read. And has Mr. H. read all that I have published? I believe he will not affirm it. So any man of understanding may judge, before he opens his book, what manner of review it is likely to contain! However, it must be owned that he and his faithful allies have been at the pains of looking into many of my writings. I say many; for I apprehend there are many more, which they have not so much as looked into; nor does it appear that they have seriously looked through any, so as to observe the scope and tenor of them. However, from those which he or they have, after a fashion, revised, abundance of objections are extracted. It is true, none of them (one only excepted) are new, and there is hardly one that has not been answered again and again. Yet since they are proposed in a new form, they may seem to demand a new answer.

10. The grand objection is, that I am inconsistent with myself. This, therefore, I shall particularly consider. The others, which flutter up and down the whole work, I can but just touch upon. Mr. H. opens the charge thus: "Saying and unsaying is nothing new with Mr. W., who has only shown himself consistent, by a regular series of inconsistencies." (Page 3.) "How full are you of contradictions to yourself! how full of contrary purposes! How often do you chide with yourself! How oft do you fight with yourself!" (Title page.) "Mr. W. seems well contented you should settle his creed. If you can, you will do in a few months what he himself has not been able to effect in near forty years." "On this fluctuating ocean he has been tossed for so many years together." (Page 20.) "All his Journals and Tracts are replete with proofs of his having been tossed from one system to another, and from one opinion to another, from the time of his ordination to this present moment." (Page 143.) "The most ignorant collier can immediately see his inconsistency with himself." (Page 145.) He sums up the whole charge in the lively words of Mr. Cudworth, graced with the name of Mr. Hervey: "Contradiction, didst thou ever know so trusty a friend, so faithful a devotee? Many people are ready enough to contradict others; but it seems all one to this gentleman whether it be another or himself, so he may but contradict."

11. To prove this indictment, (urged home enough, though there is not one tittle of truth in it,) Mr. H. has cited no less than a hundred and one witnesses.⁴⁶ Before I enter upon the examination of these, I beg leave to transcribe what I wrote some time since to Dr. Rutherford: "You frequently charge me with evasion; and others have brought the same charge. The plain case is this: I have wrote on various heads; and always as clearly as I could. Yet many have misunderstood my words, and raised abundance of objections. I answered them by explaining myself, showing what I did not mean, and what I did. One and another of the objectors stretched his throat, and cried out, 'Evasion, evasion!' And what does all this outcry amount to? Why, exactly thus much: They imagined they had tied me so fast, that it was impossible for me to escape. But presently the cobwebs were swept away, and I was quite at liberty. And I bless God I can unravel truth and falsehood, although artfully twisted together. Of

such evasion I am not ashamed. Let them be ashamed who constrain me to use it.”

12. Mr. H.’s numerous proofs of my contradicting myself may be ranged under twenty-four heads. I shall examine these one by one, in what appears to me to be the most natural order: —

I.

1. “There was an everlasting covenant between God the Father and God the Son concerning man’s redemption.” vs. “There never was any such covenant between God the Father and God the Son.” (Page 128.)

The latter of these I believe, and always did, since I could read my Bible.

But Mr. H. brings a passage out of the Christian Library, to contradict this. On which he parades as follows: “If the Christian Library be, as Mr. W. affirms, ‘all true, all agreeable to the word of God,’ then what are we to think of his other works? They must be an adulteration of man’s devising.” (Page 128.) “The same may be said of the Minutes: If these be truly orthodox, upwards of forty volumes of the Library must be thoroughly heterodox. And then there is great reason to lament, that so many poor people’s pockets should be fleeced for what can do their souls no good.”

Peremptory enough! But let us examine the matter more closely: “Mr. W. affirms, that the Christian Library is ‘all true, all agreeable to the word of God.’” I do not; and I am glad I have this public opportunity of explaining myself concerning it. My words are, “I have made, as I was able, an attempt of this kind. I have endeavored to extract such a collection of English divinity, as, I believe, is all true, all agreeable to the oracles of God.” (Preface, p. 4.) I did believe, and I do believe, every tract therein to be true, and agreeable to the oracles of God. But I do not roundly affirm this, (as Mr. H. asserts,) of every sentence contained in the fifty volumes. I could not possibly affirm it, for two reasons:

- (1.) I was obliged to prepare most of those tracts for the press, just as I could snatch time in traveling, not transcribing them; (none expected it of me;) but only marking the lines with my pen, and altering or adding a few words here and there, as I had mentioned in the preface.
- (2.) As it was not in my power to attend the press, that care necessarily devolved on others; through whose inattention a hundred passages were left in, which I had scratched out; yet not so many as to make up “forty volumes,” no, nor forty pages. It is probable too, I myself might overlook some sentences which were not suitable to my own principles. It is certain, the correctors of the press did this, in not a few instances. I shall be much obliged to Mr. H. and his friends, if they will point out all those instances; and I will print them as an *index expurgatorius* to the work, which will make it doubly valuable.

The plain inference is, If there are a hundred passages in the “Christian Library” which contradict any or all of my doctrines, these are no proof that I contradict myself. Be it observed once for all, therefore, citations from the “Christian Library” prove nothing but the carelessness of the correctors.

II.

For election and perseverance. vs. Against election and perseverance.
(Page 101.)

2. Mr. Sellon has clearly showed, that the Seventeenth Article does not assert absolute predestination. Therefore, in denying this, I neither contradict that Article, nor myself.
3. “I believe there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall.” (But I never thought a babe in Christ was in that state, though he is a true believer.)

4. “Saved beyond the dread of falling.” (So says my brother. That is nothing to me.)

The note adds: “Mr. W. drew lots, whether or no he should preach against the Seventeenth Article.”

That paltry story is untrue; though Mr. H. potently believes it. So all the witticisms built upon it fall to the ground at once. I never preached against the Seventeenth Article, nor had the least thought of doing it. But did Mr. Hill never preach against the Thirty-first Article, which explicitly asserts universal redemption?

5. “I do not deny that those eminently styled the elect shall infallibly persevere.” (I mean, those that are “perfected in love.” (1 John 4:17,) and those only. So here is no contradiction.)

6. “The love divine, Which made us thine, Shall keep us thine forever.” (So my brother speaks. But his words cannot prove that I contradict myself.)

7. “From all eternity with love, Unchangeable thou has me view’d.” (I believe this is true on the supposition of faith foreseen, not otherwise.)

8. “Never again will he take him away.” (They are my brother’s words, not mine.)

9. “Jesus, the lover of his own, Will love me to the end.” (So are these.)

10. “Christ is in the elect world of his Church.” (This is cited from the “Christian Library.” So it goes for nothing.

The nine witnesses, therefore, examined on this head, prove just nothing at all. So that hitherto there is not the least proof that I contradict myself.

III.

For imputed righteousness. vs. Against imputed righteousness.

11. “We no more deny the phrase (of imputed righteousness) that the thing.” (“Do not dispute for that particular phrase.” Here is no contradiction: I do not deny it; yet I dare not dispute for it.

12. “This doctrine I have believed and taught for near eight-and-twenty years.” (“The use of that term has done immense hurt.” It has; but there is not contradiction.)

13. This is a citation from the “Christian Library.” So it goes for nothing.

14. “I continually affirm, that the righteousness of Christ (in the sense there explained) is imputed to every believer.” (“Where is the use of contending so strenuously for those expressions?” I ask it again. But where is the contradiction?)

15. This is another citation from the “Christian Library.” So it proves nothing.

16. “The wedding-garment is Christ’s righteousness, first imputed, and then implanted.” (The wedding-garment is holiness. This does not include, but presupposes, the other.)

17. “This is consistent with our being justified through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness.” (“John Goodwin contradicts this.” Perhaps so; but John Goodwin is not John Wesley. Whatever, therefore, he says, (observe it once for all,) does not prove that I contradict myself. I am no way engaged to defend every expression of either John Goodwin, or Richard Baxter’s Aphorisms. The sense of both I generally approve, the language many times I do not.)

But I observe here, and in fifty other instances, Mr. H. mentions no page. Now, in controversy, he that names no page has no right to any answer.

18. “I frequently put this expression into the mouth of a whole congregation; that is, I sing an hymn wherein it occurs.” (“I dare not

require any to use it.” True; but here is no contradiction. I do not require any to use it. Everyone in the congregation may use or let it alone.)

Here comes in a thundering note: “Although most of these extracts from Mr. Wesley’s sermon on Jeremiah 23:6, have a very evangelical appearance, yet all their excellency vanisheth away, when we are told in the same sermon, that the righteousness he contends for is not the divine righteousness of Christ, but his human righteousness. When we consider the express words of the text, ‘The Lord our Righteousness,’ one might wonder (if anything is to be wondered at that Mr. Wesley affirms) how he could possibly fall into an error, which at once not only destroys the meritorious efficacy of the Redeemer’s righteousness, but undermines the virtue of his atoning blood.” This is home; Mr. Hill has broke my head sadly. But he will soon give me a plaster: “However, if Mr. Wesley will acknowledge, that by Christ’s human righteousness, he means that mediatorial righteousness which was wrought by God in the human nature, I entirely acquiesce with him on the point.” This is truly marvelous! Why, what could Mr. Wesley mean beside? So this error proves to be no error at all! And “all the excellency” which “vanisheth away,” appears again *in statu quo!*

But we are not come to the end of the note yet; it contains another dreadful objection: “Mr. Wesley is unwilling” (truly I am) “to be ranked among the Diabolonians, and therefore, with more prudence than candor, has left the whole passage concerning the election-doubters out of the ‘Holy War.’” And if Mr. Hill had omitted it too, it would have been no more an impeachment of his prudence, than it was of my candor, to omit, in all the tracts I abridged, whatever I disapproved of. This was what I professed at my setting out: “I have endeavored” (these are my very words) “to preserve a consistency throughout, that no part might contradict any other. But in order to this, I have been obliged to omit the far greatest part of several authors. And in a design of this nature, I apprehend myself to be at full liberty so to do.” (*Preface*, p. 5.) The “abridged Bunyan” is not therefore “the counterfeit Bunyan.” This is a flourish of Mr. Hill’s pen.

19. This instance sets nothing against nothing, the “Christian Library” against John Goodwin.

20. “This is an emblem of the righteousness of the saints, both of their justification and sanctification.” (“John Goodwin contradicts this.” So he may; but I am not John Goodwin. So we have examined twenty witnesses; and not one of all these proves that I contradict myself.)

21. “I would address myself to you who are so ready to condemn all that use these expressions as Antinomians.” (“On Mr. Hervey’s using one of them, Mr. Wesley says, ‘Why are you at such pains to increase the number of Antinomians?’”)

But I do not condemn him as an Antinomian: Therefore, here is no contradiction.

22. Again: “Is not this, that Christ has satisfied the demands of the law, the very quintessence of Antinomianism?” (Whether it is or no, it is wide of the mark; for this is none of the expressions in question.)

23. Again: “To say, ‘The claims of the law are all answered,’ is not this Antinomianism without a mask?” (Yes; but it is none of the expressions in question: So it is no contradiction.)

24. Once more: “There are many expressions in this Dialogue which directly lead to Antinomianism.” (So I think. Yet I do not condemn all that use them as Antinomians: So here is no contradiction still.)

25. “It is by faith we build on this foundation, the imputed righteousness of Christ.” (“If faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ is a fundamental principle, what becomes of all those who think nothing about imputed righteousness?”)

Here is no contradiction. Suppose I build my faith on this foundation, the imputed righteousness of Christ, it does not follow it is so fundamental a principle, that all who think nothing about it will be damned.

26. "But is not a believer clothed with the righteousness of Christ? Undoubtedly he is." (Goodwin; that is, nothing.)

27. "The mantle of Christ's righteousness." (*Christian Library*.) (Goodwin again: Nothing against nothing.)

28. "Christian Library." (Nothing.)

29. "The sole cause of our acceptance with God is the righteousness and the death of Christ, who fulfilled God's law, and died in our stead." ("I cannot prove, that it was requisite for Christ to fulfill the moral law in order to his purchasing redemption for us. By his sufferings alone the law was satisfied.")

Undoubtedly it was. Therefore, although I believe Christ fulfilled God's law, yet I do not affirm he did this to purchase redemption for us. This was done by his dying in our stead.

30. "Verses of Charles Wesley." (Let him answer.)

31, 32, 33. "Title to Life." "Christian Library." Nothing. (John Goodwin: Nothing.)

34. "The righteousness of Christ is imputed to everyone that believes." (Ditto.)

Here follows another thundering note: "When Mr. Wesley preached this sermon, he told the congregation, 'It was the same doctrine which Mr. Romaine, Mr. Madan, and Mr. Whitefield preached.'" So it was; Mr. Whitefield did, Mr. Romaine and Mr. Madan do, preach the doctrine contained in that sermon; namely, that "we are justified, sanctified, and glorified, merely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered for us." But did I say, this was all the doctrine which they preached? No; and no man in his senses could understand me so. I did not therefore "impose on the credulity of my hearers, by making them believe" any more than was strictly true. But "did they ever hold the tenets pleaded for in the books published by Mr. Wesley?" Whether they did or no is out of the present

question; they did, and do, hold the doctrine contained in that sermon. “Mr. Wesley knows, they from their hearts subscribe to Mr. Hervey’s Eleven Letters.” I hope not; from any that do, I expect no more mercy than from a mad dog. “But if he had constantly preached that doctrine, how came so many to testify their surprise at that discourse?” Because God set it home upon their hearts. Hence it appeared new, though they had heard it over and over. “How came they to press the printing of it, in order to stop the mouths of gainsayers?” Because they judged it would affect others as it affected them; though I never thought it would. “Lastly: If Mr. Wesley had constantly maintained this doctrine, why must poor John Bunyan be embowelled, to make him look like Mr. Wesley?” No; his Calvinism is omitted, to make him like the authors going before him; “to preserve a consistency throughout the work;” which still is not done as I could wish. However, those that are fond of his bowels may put them in again, and swallow them as they would the trail of a woodcock.

35. “They to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed (I mean, who truly believe) are made righteous by the Spirit of Christ.” (“The nice, metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness, instead of furthering men in holiness, makes them satisfied without any holiness at all.”)

I have known a thousand instances of this. And yet “they who truly believe in Christ are made righteous by his Spirit.” Where is the contradiction between these propositions?

36. “Christian Library.” (Nothing.)

37. “Christ is not the righteousness of all that truly believe.” (Baxter’s Aphorisms go for nothing. Richard Baxter is not John Wesley.)

38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43. Nothing against. (Nothing.)

44. “To all believers, the righteousness of Christ is imputed.” (Goodwin: Nothing.)

We have now examined four-and-forty witnesses; but still have no proof that I contradict myself, either with regard to the covenant, election, and

perseverance, or the imputed righteousness of Christ. With regard to this, the thing, that we are justified merely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered, I have constantly and earnestly maintained above four-and-thirty years. And I have frequently used the phrase, hoping thereby to please others “for their good to edification.” But it has had a contrary effect, since so many improve it into an objection. Therefore, I will use it no more, unless it occur in an hymn, or steal upon me unawares; I will endeavor to use only such phrases as are strictly scriptural. And I will advise all my brethren, all who are in connection with me throughout the three kingdoms, to lay aside that ambitious, unscriptural phrase, which is so liable to be misinterpreted, and to speak in all instances, this in particular,” as the oracles of God.”

IV.

**“Suffering the penalty is not all the law requires.” vs.
Suffering the penalty is all the law requires. (Page 132.)**

45. “So says the ‘Christian Library.’” (So says John Goodwin.)

But this does not prove that I contradict myself.

V.

**St. Paul speaks of the law as a person. vs.
St. Paul does not speak of the law as a person. (Page 138.)**

46. “The law is here spoken of as a person, to which, as to an husband, life and death are ascribed.” (“This way of speaking of the law as a person injured, and to be satisfied, seems hardly defensible.”)

There is no contradiction here. I do affirm, St. Paul speaks of the law “as a person to which, as an husband, life and death are ascribed.” But I deny, that he speaks of it “as a person injured, and to be satisfied.”

VI.

For a twofold justification. vs. Against a twofold justification.

47. “Mr. F. affirms, justification is twofold.” (“The justification spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, and in our Articles, is one and no more.” (Page 133.))

Most true. And yet our Lord speaks of another justification. (Matthew 12:37.) Now, I think one and one make two.

VII.

For a justified state. vs. Against a justified state. (Page 139.)

48. “The state of a justified person is inexpressibly great and glorious.” (“Does not talking of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men.” It frequently does. But where is the contradiction?)

VIII.

They who are once justified are justified forever. vs. They who are justified may become total apostates.

49. “Christian Library.” (Nothing.)

IX.

Works are a condition of justification. (Page 134.) vs. Works are not a condition of justification.

50. "Salvation (that is, glory) is not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition." (I believe no good works can be previous to justification; nor, consequently, a condition of it.)

51. "If a man could be holy before he was justified, it would set his justification aside." (This proposition does not speak of justification: So it is nothing to the purpose.)

52. "Thou canst do nothing but sin till thou art justified."

53. "We allow that God justifies the ungodly, him that to that hour is full of all evil, void of all good; and him that worketh not, that till that moment worketh no goodness." ("Whoever desires to find favor with God, should 'cease from evil, and learn to do well.' Whoever repents, should do 'works meet for repentance.' And if this is not in order to find favor, what does he do them for?")

All this I believe still. "But Mr. W. says, Whoever desires to find favor with God should 'cease from evil and learn to do well,'" etc. Does not the Bible say so? Who can deny it? "Nay, but Mr. W. asks, 'If this be not in order to find favors what does he do them for?'" And I ask it again. Let Mr. H., or anyone else, give me an answer. So, if there is any contradiction here, it is not I contradict myself, but Isaiah and our Lord that contradict St. Paul.

X.

Against justification by the act of believing. vs. For justification by the act of believing.

54. "But do not you put faith in the room of Christ and his righteousness? No; I take particular care to put each of these in its proper place." ("The

faith which is said to be imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is faith properly taken; and not the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith.”)

This is putting “each of these in its proper place.” The righteousness of Christ is the meritorious cause of our justification: That is its proper place. Faith in Him that gave himself for us is the condition of justification: That is its proper place.

I am justified through the righteousness of Christ, as the price; through faith, as the condition. I do not say, neither does Goodwin, Faith is that for which we were accepted; but we both say, Faith is that through which we are accepted. We are justified, we are accepted of God, for the sake of Christ, through faith. Now, certainly, there is no contradiction in this, unless a contradiction to Mr. H.’s notions.

55. “Although we have faith, hope, and love, yet we must renounce the merit of all, as far too weak to deserve our justification; for which we must trust only to the merits of Christ.” (“That which is the condition of justification is not the righteousness of Christ.” Most true; otherwise we confound the condition with the meritorious cause spoken of in the opposite column.)

XI.

*Justification by faith alone is articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae.*⁴⁷

56. “Of this may be affirmed, (what Luther affirms of justification by faith,) that it is *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, the pillar of that faith of which alone cometh salvation; that faith which unless a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.” (“A pious Churchman who has not clear conceptions of justification by faith may be saved; yea, a Mystic, (Mr. Law, for instance,) who denies justification by faith. If so, the doctrine of justification by faith is not *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*.”)

It is certain here is a seeming contradiction; but it is not a real one. For these two opposite propositions do not speak of the same thing. The latter speaks of justification by faith; the former, of trusting in the righteousness or merits of Christ; justification by faith is only mentioned incidentally in a parenthesis. Now, although Mr. Law denied justification by faith, he might trust in the merits of Christ. It is this, and this only, that I affirm, (whatever Luther does,) to be *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*.

XII.

Mr. W. is a Calvinist in the point of justification. vs. Mr. W. has leaned too much toward Calvinism in this point.

57. "I think on justification just as I have done these seven-and-twenty years, and just as Calvin does." ("We have leaned too much toward Calvinism." (Page 141.) But not in this point; not as to justification by faith.)

We still agree with him, that the merits of Christ are the cause, faith the condition, of justification.

58. "I have occasionally used those expressions, 'imputed righteousness,' the 'righteousness of Christ,' and the like. But I never used them in any other sense than that where in Calvin does." (Goodwin. Nothing.)

XIII.

59. "Mr. W. does approve the expression, 'Why me?'" vs. "Mr. W. does not approve the expression, 'Why me?'"

My brother uses it in an hymn. (“Mr. F. says, Mr. W. doubts concerning it.” (Page 140.)

This proof halts on both feet. “But why did not Mr. W. strike out of Mr. F.’s manuscript the honorable expressions concerning himself? “Because he thought them a proper counterbalance to the contumelious expressions of Mr. H.

XIV.

Our sin is imputed to Christ, and Christ’s righteousness to us. vs. Our sin is not imputed to Christ, nor Christ’s righteousness to us. (Page 130.)

60, 61, 62. “Christian Library.” (Nothing.)

XV.

Both Adam’s sin and Christ’s righteousness are imputed. (Page 131.) vs. Neither Adam’s sin nor Christ’s righteousness is imputed.

63. Nothing against nothing.

In what sense I believe the “Christian Library” to be all true, I have declared above.

XVI.

Mr. W. holds free will. vs. Mr. W. wonders how any man can hold free will.

64. “Mr. F. holds free will.” (“Mr. W. denies it.”)

This may prove that Mr. W. contradicts Mr. F., but it can never prove that he contradicts himself. But, indeed, both Mr. F. and Mr. W. absolutely deny natural free will. We both steadily assert that the will of man is by nature free only to evil. Yet we both believe that every man has a measure of free will restored to him by grace.

XVII.

For the doctrine of merit. v. Against the doctrine of merit.

65. “We are rewarded according to our works, yea, because of our works. How does this differ from ‘for the sake of our works?’ And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*, or, ‘as our works deserve?’ Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.” — I say so still. Let Mr. H., if he can. (“And yet I still maintain, there is no merit, taking the word strictly, but in the blood of Christ; that salvation is not by the merit of works; and that there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can, strictly speaking, deserve the least thing at God’s hand.”)

And all this is no more than to say, Take the word *merit* in a strict sense, and I utterly renounce it; take it in a looser sense, and though I never use it, yet I do not condemn it. Therefore, with regard to the word *merit*, I do not contradict myself at all.

XVIII.

For a single life. vs. Against a single life.

66. “Mr. W. says, his thoughts on a single life are just the same they have been these thirty years.” (“Why, then, did Mr. W. marry?” For reasons best known to himself. (Page 136.)

67. “He advises that we should pray against marriage.” (“I advise single persons to pray, that they may prize the advantages they enjoy.”

Be this right or wrong, still here is no contradiction.

XIX.

For gay apparel. vs. Against gay apparel.

68. “To make it a point of conscience to differ from others (as the Quakers do) in the shape or color of their apparel, is mere superstition.” So I advise; but I do not “make it a point of conscience.” So here is no contradiction still. (“Let a single intention to please God prescribe both what clothing you should buy, and the manner wherein it shall be made.” (*Ibid.*) This I stand to. “Wear nothing of a glaring color, or made in the very height of fashion.”)

XX.

Against tea. vs. For tea.

69. “Mr. W. published a tract against drinking tea, and told the tea-drinkers, he would set them an example in that piece of self-denial.” (I did set them an example for twelve years. Then, at the close of a consumption, by Dr. Fothergill’s direction, I used it again.)

But must not a man be sadly in want of argument who stoops so low as this?

XXI.

For baptism by sprinkling. vs. Against baptism by sprinkling.

70. "As there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture, so there is very probable proof to the contrary." ("When Mr. W. baptized Mrs. L. S., he held her so long under water, that her friends screamed out, thinking she had been drowned." When? Where? I never heard of it before.)

71. "Christ nowhere, as far as I can find, requires dipping, but only baptizing; which word signifies to pour on, or sprinkle, as well as to dip." ("Why then did you at Savannah baptize all children by immersion, unless the parents certified they were weak?" Not because I had any scruple, but in obedience to the Rubric. So here is so self-inconsistency.)

XXII.

Mr. W. never adopted Mr. Law's scheme. vs. Mr. W. highly approved of Mr. Law.

These propositions are not contradictory. I might highly approve of him, and yet not adopt his scheme. How will Mr. H. prove that I did? or that I contradict myself on this head? Why thus: —

72. "I had been eight years at Oxford before I read any of Mr. Law's writings. And when I did, I was so far from making them my creed, that I had objections to almost every page." (Page 135.) ("To instruct a person in the nature of Christianity, I fixed an hour a day, to read with her in Mr. Law's treatise on 'Christian Perfection.'" I did so. And an excellent book it is, though liable to many objections.)

"Another little company of us met: We sung, read a little of Mr. Law, and then conversed." (True; but neither does this prove that I adopted his scheme.)

73. "I believe the Mystic writers to be one great Anti-Christ." (I retract this. It is far too strong. But observe, I never contradicted it till now!)

74. “Mr. F. affirms, Solomon is the chief of Mystics; and Mr. W. acquiesces in the affirmation.” (I do not. I affirm no such thing. Therefore all Mr. H. builds upon this is only a castle in the air.)

XXIII.

Enoch and Elijah are in heaven. vs. Enoch and Elijah are not in heaven.

75. “Enoch and Elijah entered at once into the highest degree of glory.” (“Enoch and Elijah are not in heaven, but only in paradise.” (Page 138.))

“Notes on the New Testament, John 3:13, first edition.”

But why is Mr. H. so careful to name the first edition? Because in the second the mistake is corrected. Did he know this? And could he avail himself of a mistake which he knew was removed before he wrote!

XXIV.

For sinless perfection. vs. Against sinless perfection.

Upon this head Mr. H. employs his whole strength. I will therefore the more carefully weigh what he advances; only premising, before I descend to particulars, two general observations:

- (1.) Out of the twenty-five passages cited for perfection, seventeen are taken from my brother's Hymns. These, therefore, strike wide. Whatever they prove, they cannot prove that I contradict myself.
- (2.) Out of the twenty-five cited against perfection, fourteen are cited from the sermon on “Sin in Believers.” Do I mean, in such believers as are “perfected in love?” Mr. H. himself knows I do not. Why then every one of these fourteen arguments is an abuse both upon

me and his readers. It is the most egregious trifling that can be conceived. I affirm, “Those perfected in love are saved from inward sin.” To prove I contradict myself herein, fourteen passages are alleged, wherein I affirm, “We are not saved from inward sin till we are ‘perfected in love.’”

- (3.) The same fallacy is used in every instance, when some of my words are set in opposition to others. The sum is, — weak believers, babes in Christ, are not, adult believers are, saved from inward sin. And I still aver, there is no contradiction in this, if I know what a contradiction means.

Now to the proofs: —

76. “The Son hath made them who are thus ‘born of God’ free from pride.” (“They are sensible of pride remaining in their hearts.”)

They? Who? Not those who are thus “born of God,” who are “perfected in love.”

77. “From the iniquity of pride, And self, I shall be free.” That is, when I am “perfected in love.” (“God’s children are daily sensible of pride and self-will.” That is, till they are “perfected in love.”)

78. “They are freed from wanderings in prayer.” (Is this spoken of all believers? Mr. H. knows it is not.)

79. “Christians are saved from all sin, from all unrighteousness.” (True, adult Christians.)

80. “They (adult Christians) are freed from all evil thoughts and evil tempers.” (“The (infant) children of God have in them sin of every kind.”)

81. “They (fathers in Christ) are freed from evil thoughts.” (“The evil nature opposes the Spirit even in believers,” — till they are fathers in Christ.)

82. "Christ was free from sinful thoughts. So are they likewise," — adult believers. ("This doctrine (that all believers are thus free) is wholly new.")

83. "I believe some would say, 'We trust we do keep the whole law of love.'" ("Believers are conscious of not fulfilling the whole law of love;" not till they are "perfected in love.")

The reader will please to remember all along, the question is not whether the doctrine be right or wrong, (that has been elsewhere considered,) but whether I contradict myself. Upwards of fourscore witnesses have been already examined on this head; but no contradiction is proved yet.

84. "Some do love God with all their heart and strength." ("They (weak believers) do not love God with all their heart and strength.")

85. "From that hour, indwelling sin, Thou hast no place in me." (Believer are not delivered from the being of sin till that hour.)

86. "A sinless life we live." ("Christian Library:" Nothing.)

87. "While one evil thought can rise, I am not born again." (My brother said so once: I never did.)

In the note annexed there are many mistakes:

- (1.) "The author of this hymn did not allow anyone to be a believer, even in the lowest sense, while he found the least stirring of sin." He did; but he took the word "born again" in too high a sense.
- (2.) Yet "he supposes the most advanced believers are deeply sensible of their impurity." He does not; neither he nor I suppose any such thing.
- (3.) "He tells us in his note on Ephesians 6:13, 'The war is perpetual.'" True: The war with "principalities and powers;" but not that "with flesh and blood."
- (4.) So you cannot reply: "Mr. W. speaks of believers of different stature." Indeed I can; and the forgetting this is the main cause of Mr. H.'s stumbling at every step.

- (5.)“The position, that any believers are totally free from sin, is diametrically opposite to Calvinism.” This is no mistake. Therefore most Calvinists hate it with a perfect hatred.
- (6.)“Many of the grossest of these contradictions were published nearly at the same time; and probably Mr. W. was the same day correcting the press, both for and against sinless perfection.” An ingenious thought! but as to the truth or even probability of it, I cannot say much.
- (7.)“These Hymns contain the joint sentiments of Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley.” Not always; so that if some of them contradict others, it does not prove that I contradict myself.

88. “Christ in a pure and sinless heart.” (“There are still two contrary principles in believers, nature and grace.” True, till they are perfect in love.

89. “Quite expel the carnal mind.” (“That there is no sin in a (weak) believer, no carnal mind, is contrary to the word of God.”)

90. “From every evil motion freed.” (“How naturally do men think, Sin has no motion; therefore it has no being!”)

But how does this prove that I contradict myself?

91. “All the struggle then is o’er.”

92. “I wrestle not now.” (These are two of my brother’s expressions, which I do not subscribe to.)

93. “God is thine: Disdain to fear The enemy within.” (“Let us watch and pray against the enemy within.”)

Are these lines cited as implying the enemy was *not* within? Most unhappily. They mean, the enemy which *is* within. For the very next words, which Mr. H. himself cited but the page before, are,

God shall in thy flesh appear,
And make an end of sin.

94. “We wrestle not with flesh and blood when” we are grown up in Christ. (“We wrestle both with flesh and blood, and with principalities,” while we are babes in Christ.)

No contradiction yet.

95. “Sin shall not in our flesh remain.” “Still he (the babe in Christ) feels the remains of the old man.”

96. “I cannot rest if sin in me remains.” (“Sin remains in them still;” — in all weak believers.)

97, 98, 99. My brother’s.

100. “Do not the best of men say, ‘*We groan, being burdened* with the workings of inbred corruption?’” This is not the meaning of the text: The whole context shows the cause of that groaning was, their longing to be with Christ. (“We groan, being burdened with numberless infirmities, temptations, and sins.” — This is wrong. It is not the meaning of the text. I will put it out, if I live to print another edition. So just one shot in a hundred has hit the mark.)

101. “Nor does he that is born of God sin by infirmities; for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will; and without this, they are not properly sins.” — That is, they are not voluntary transgressions of a known law. (“Many infirmities remain, whereby we are daily subject to what are called ‘sins of infirmity.’ And they are in some sense sins; as being (involuntary) transgressions of the perfect law.”)

I see no contradiction here; but if there was, it ought not to have been mentioned. It could not by any generous writer; since Mr. Hill himself testifies, it was expunged before he mentioned it! But suppose it stood as at first, I flatly deny that it is any contradiction at all. These infirmities may be in some sense sins; and yet not properly so; that is, sins in an improper, but not in the proper, sense of the word.

13. But “Mr. W. has not yet determined, whether sins of surprise bring the soul under condemnation or not. However, it were to be wished, that sins of surprise and sins of infirmity too were to be declared mortal at the next Conference; since several persons who pretend to reverence Mr. W., not only fall into outrageous passions, but cozen and overreach their neighbors; and call these things little, innocent infirmities. Reader, weigh well those words of Mr. W., ‘We cannot say, either that men are or are not condemned for sins of surprise.’ And yet immediately before, he calls them transgressions, as here he calls them sins. Strange divinity this, for one who, for near forty years past, has professed to believe and teach that ‘sin is the transgression of the law,’ and that ‘the wages of sin is death.’” He then brings three instances of sins of surprise, (over and above cozening and overreaching,) drunkenness, fornication, and flying into a passion and knocking a man down; and concludes, “Mr. W. had better sleep quietly, than rise from his own pillow in order to lull his hearers asleep upon the pillow of false security, by speaking in so slight a manner of sin, and making the breach of God’s holy law a mere nothing.” (Page 111.)

14. This is a charge indeed! And it is perfectly new: I believe it was never advanced before. It will not, therefore, be improper to give it a thorough examination. It is founded on some passages in the sermon on Romans 8:1: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” In order to give a clear view of the doctrine therein delivered, I must extract the sum of the Sermon.

I show,

- (1.) Who are “those that are in Christ Jesus;” — “Those who are joined to the Lord in one spirit, who dwell in Christ and Christ in them. And ‘whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not, walketh not after the flesh,’ that is, corrupt nature. These abstain from every design, and word, and work, to which the corruption of nature leads.” (Vol. V., p. 88.) “They ‘walk after the Spirit’ both in their hearts and lives. By him they are led into every holy desire, into every divine and heavenly temper, till every thought of their heart is ‘holiness to the Lord.’”

“They are also led by Him into all holiness of conversation. They exercise themselves day and night, to do only the things which please God: In all their outward behavior, to follow him who left us an example that we might tread in his steps;’ in all their intercourse with their neighbor, to walk in justice, mercy, and truth; and whatsoever they do in every circumstance of life to ‘do all to the glory of God.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 89.)

Is here any room for “cozening and overreaching;” for “flying into outrageous passions?” Does this give any countenance for “knocking men down?” for “drunkenness or fornication?”

But let us go on to the Second head: “To whom is there no condemnation? To believers in Christ, who thus ‘walk after the Spirit,’ there is no condemnation for their past sins.” (*Ibid.*) “Neither for present, for now transgressing the commandments of God; for they do not transgress them. This is a proof of their love of God, that they keep his commandments.” (*Ibid.*, p. 90.) “They are not condemned,

- (3.) For inward sin, so long as they do not yield thereto; so long as they maintain a continual war with all sin, with pride, anger, desire, so that the flesh hath no dominion over them, but they still ‘walk after the Spirit.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 91.) Is any encouragement given here to cozeners or whoremongers?

It follows, “They are not condemned for sins of infirmity, as they are usually called. Perhaps it were advisable rather to call them infirmities, that we may not seem to give any countenance to sin, or to extenuate it in any degree, by thus coupling it with infirmity. But, if we must use such an ambiguous and dangerous expression, by sins of infirmity I would mean, such involuntary failings as the saying a thing we believe true, though in fact it prove to be false; or the hurting our neighbor without knowing or designing it, perhaps when we designed to do him good.” (*Ibid.*, p. 92.)

What pretense has Mr. H. from these words to flourish away upon my “strange divinity;” and to represent me as giving men a handle to term gross sins innocent infirmities?

But now comes the main point: “It is more difficult to determine concerning those which are usually styled sins of surprise: As when one who commonly in his patience possesses his soul, on a sudden or violent temptation, speaks or acts in a manner not consistent with the royal law of love.” (For instance: You have the gout. A careless man treads on your foot. You violently push him away, and, it may be, cry out, “Get away! Get you out of my sight!”) “Perhaps it is not easy to fix a general rule concerning transgressions of this nature. We cannot say either that men are, or that they are not, condemned for sins of surprise in general.” (Pages 152, 153.)

“Reader,” says Mr. H., “let me beg thee to weigh well the foregoing words.” I say so too. I go on: “But it seems, whenever a believer is overtaken in a fault, there is more or less condemnation, as there is more or less concurrence of his will. Therefore, some sins of surprise bring much guilt and condemnation. For in some instances our being surprised may be owing to some culpable neglect, or to a sleepiness of soul, which might have been prevented or shaken off before the temptation came. The falling even by surprise, in such an instance, exposes the sinner to condemnation, both from God and his own conscience.

“On the other hand, there may be sudden assaults, which he hardly could foresee, by which he may be born down, suppose into a degree of anger, or thinking evil of another, with scarce any concurrence of the will. Now, in such a case, the jealous God would undoubtedly show him that he had done foolishly. He would be convinced of having swerved from the perfect law, and consequently grieved with a godly sorrow, and lovingly ashamed before God. Yet need he not come into condemnation. In the midst of that sorrow and shame, he can still say, ‘The Lord is my strength and my song; he is also become my salvation.’” (Page 154.)

Now, what can any impartial person think of Mr. H.’s eloquence on this head? What a representation has he given of my doctrine, with regard to

infirmities and sins of surprise? Was ever anything more unjust? Was ever anything more cruel? Do I here “lull my readers asleep on the pillow of false security? Do I “speak in a light manner of sin?” or “make the breach of God’s holy law a mere nothing?” What excuse can be made for pouring out all this flood of calumny? Can anything be termed “bearing false witness against our neighbor,” if this is not? Am I indeed a loose casuist? Do any of my writings give countenance to sin? Not so: God knows, Mr. Hill knows, Mr. Romaine, who corrected this tract, knows it well. So does Mr. Madan; yea, so do all who read what I write, unless they willfully shut their eyes.

15. “Thus have I at length,” says Mr. H., “brought this extraordinary farrago to a conclusion. Not because I could not have found many more inconsistencies.” (Page 142.) Yes, another hundred, such as these. But see a group of them at once: “His extract from Bishop Beveridge is flatly contradicted in his edition of ‘John Goodwin.’ Again: Goodwin is flatly contradicted by his sermon on ‘The Lord our Righteousness.’ This sermon is contradicted in his ‘Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion.’ This Preservative is itself contradicted by his ‘Abstract from Dr. Preston.’ This Abstract is itself contradicted by his edition of ‘Baxter’s Aphorisms.’ And these are again flatly contradicted by his ‘Extract from Bishop Beveridge.’ And this is again flatly contradicted by his own ‘Thoughts on Imputed Righteousness.’ Thus the wheel runs round!” Thus Mr. H.’s head runs round with more haste than good speed. (If this curious paragraph be not rather, as I suspect, supplied by another hand; even as Sternhold’s Psalms are now and then eked out by N. N., or William Wisdom.) He forgets that generals prove nothing; and that he has sadly failed in his particular charges; just an hundred, out of an hundred and one, having proved void. So that now I have full right to say, Whence arises this charge of inconsistency and self contradiction? Merely from straining, winding to and fro, and distorting a few innocent words. For wherein have I contradicted myself, taking, words in their unforced, natural construction, in any one respect, with regard to justification, since the year 1738?

16. But Mr. H.’s head is so full of my self-inconsistency, that he still blunders on: “Mr. W.’s wavering disposition is not an affair of yesterday.

Mr. Delamotte spake to him on this head more than thirty years ago.” (Page 143.) He never spake to me on this head at all. Ask him. He is still alive. “He has been tossed from one system to another, from the time of his ordination to the present moment.” Nothing can be more false; as not only my “Journals,” but all my writings, testify. “And he himself cannot but acknowledge that both his friends and foes have accused him of his unsettled principles in religion.” Here is artifice! Would any man living, who does not know the fact, suppose that a gentleman would face a man down, in so peremptory a manner, unless the thing were absolutely true? And yet it is quite the reverse. “He himself cannot but acknowledge! “I acknowledge no such thing. My friends have oftener accused me of being too stiff in my opinions, than too flexible. My enemies have accused me of both; and of everything besides. The truth is, from the year 1725, I saw more and more of the nature of inward religion, chiefly by reading the writings of Mr. Law, and a few other mystic writers. Yet I never was “in the way of Mysticism” at all; this is another mistake. Although I did not clearly see that we “are saved by faith” till the year 1738, I then published the sermon on “Salvation by Faith,” every sentence of which I subscribe to now.

17. But he “was too scrupulous about using the word condition.” (Page 143.) I was so, till I was convinced by Dr. Church, that it was a very innocent word; and one that none of the Reformers, English or foreign, objected to. All this time I leaned towards Calvinism, though more in expression than sentiment. “And now he fairly gives up the necessity of a clear belief of justification by faith alone!” That is, I say, A man may be saved, who is not clear in his judgment concerning it. I do; I dare not “rank Mr. Law, and all his admirers, among the hosts of Diabolonians.” Nay, more: “I have proved that he makes man’s righteousness the procuring cause of his acceptance with God; and his salvation, from first to last, to depend upon the intrinsic merit of his own unassisted works.” (Page 144.) I think Mr. H. “is how got to his *ne plas ultra*,” unless he has a mind to prove that Mr. W. is an horse.

18. “I expect you will tell me that I have exposed Mr. W., particularly in the foregoing contrast. That Mr. W. is exposed, I allow; but that I have

exposed him, I deny." Who was it then? Why, "out of his own mouth all that I have brought against him proceeds."

Not so: All that I have wrote, except one sentence out of an hundred and one, is well consistent with itself, provided the words be taken in their plain, natural sense, and one part of them in connection with the other. But whoever will use Mr. H.'s art of twisting and torturing words, may make them say anything, and extract Pelagianism, Arianism, or anything he pleases, out of anything that can be spoken. By this art, he that cries out against Mr. F.'s art has found, that is, created, above an hundred contradictions in my works, and "could find abundance more." Ay, five hundred; under his forming hand contradictions spring up as quick as mushrooms. And he that reads only (as is the manner of a thousand readers) the running title at the top of each page, —

For election,
For sinless perfection,
For imputed righteousness,

Against election,
Against sinless perfection,
Against imputed righteousness, —

and so on, will readily say, "What a heap of contradictions — flat, palpable contradictions — is here!" *Here!* Where "Why, at the top of every page." True; and there lies the strength of the cause. The propositions themselves are plain enough; but neither Mr. H. nor any man living can prove them.

19. But, if so, if all this labored contrast be only the work of a creative imagination, what has Mr. H., the cat's paw of a party, been doing all this time? Has he not been abundantly "doing evil, that good might come," that the dear decree of reprobation might stand? Has he not been "saying all manner of evil falsely;" pouring out slander like water, a first, a second, a third time, against one that never willingly offended him? And what recompence can he make (be his opinions right or wrong) for having, so deeply injured me, without any regard either to mercy or truth? If he (not I myself) has indeed exposed me in so unjust and inhuman a manner, what amends can he make, as a Christian and a gentleman, to God, to me, or to

the world? Can he gather up the foul, poisonous water which he has so abundantly poured out? If he still insists he has done me no wrong, he has only spoken "the truth in love;" if he is resolved at all hazards to fight it out, I will meet him on his own ground. Waving all things else, I fix on this point: "Is that scurrilous hotch-potch, which he calls a 'Farrago,' true or false?" will he defend or retract it? An hundred and one propositions are produced as mine, which are affirmed to contradict other propositions of mine. Do I in these hundred and one instances contradict myself, or do I not? Observe: The question is, whether I contradict myself; not whether I contradict somebody else; be it Mr. Baxter, Goodwin, Fletcher, the "Christian Library," or even my own brother: These are not myself. "Nay, but you have established them." If I publish them ten times over, still they are not myself. I insist upon it, that no man's words but my own can ever prove that I contradict myself. Now, if Mr. H. scorns to yield, let him fall to work, and prove by my own words, that I contradict myself (that is the present question) in these hundred instances. If he can prove this, I am a blunderer; I must plead Guilty to the charge. If he cannot, he is one of the most cruel and inhuman slanderers that ever set pen to paper.

20. I bless God, that the words cited from the sermon on "A Catholic Spirit" do quite "come to myself;" not indeed as I am painted by Mr. Hill, but as I really am. From the year 1738, I have not been "unsettled as to any fundamental doctrine of the gospel." No, not in one; I am as clear of this charge, as of that wonderful one advanced in the note, page 146: "Though this Sermon be entitled 'Catholic Spirit,' yet it inculcates an attendance upon one only congregation; in other words, Hear me, and those I send out, and no one else." Mr. Hill himself knows better; he knows I advise all of the Church to hear the parish Minister. I do not advise even Dissenters of any kind, not to hear their own Teachers. But I advise all, Do not "heap to yourselves Preachers, having itching ears." Do not run hither and thither to hear every new thing, else you will be established in nothing. "However, it is by stratagems of this sort, that he holds so many souls in his shackles, and prevents them from coming to the knowledge of all the glorious truths of the gospel."

Observe, *gospel* is with Mr. Hill the same as *Calvinism*. So where he says, "There is no gospel," he means no predestination. By the same figure of

speech, some of his admirers used to say, "There is no honey in the book." Here lies the core; this is the wrong, for which the bigots of this gospel will never forgive me. And all those are such, who "rank all election-doubters among Diabolonians." Such is Mr. Hill, a bigot in grain, while he sets his hand to that gentle sentence. Nay, further, says he, "I cannot help informing my readers," (no, if he did, he must burst,) "that in the life of Mr. Philip Henry, published in his 'Christian Library,' he has artfully left out Mr. Henry's Confession of faith." *Artfully!* No; honestly; according to the open profession in the preface cited before.

21. Yet Mr. Hill, this Mr. Hill, says to Mr. Fletcher, "Suffer not bitter words and calumnious expressions to disguise themselves under the appearance of plainness." (Page 147.) Bitter words! Can Mr. Hill imagine there is any harm in these? Mr. Hill that cites the judicious Mr. Toplady! that admires the famous "Eleven Letters," which are bitterness double distilled! which overflow with little else but calumnious expressions from the beginning to the end! Mr. Hill that himself wrote the "Review," and the "Farrago!" And does he complain of Mr. Fletcher's bitterness? Why, he may be a little bitter; but not Mr. Fletcher. Altering the person alters the thing! "If it was your bull that gored mine," says the judged in the fable, "that is another case!"

22. Two objections to my personal conduct, I have now briefly to consider: First, "Mr. Wesley embraced Mr. Shirley as a friend at the Conference, and then directly went out to give the signal for war." (Page 150.) This is partly true. It is true, that, although I was not ignorant of his having deeply injured me, yet I freely forgave him at the Conference, and again "embraced him as a friend." But it is not true, that I "directly went out to give the signal for war." "Nay, why else did you consent to the publishing of Mr. Fletcher's Letters?" Because I judged it would be an effectual means of undoing the mischief which Mr. Shirley had done: Not that I am now sorry (though I was) for what he has done, for his publication of that bitter Circular Letter: For I now clearly discern the hand of God throughout that whole affair. Both my brother and I still indulged the fond hope of living in peace with our warm Calvinist brethren; but we now give it up; our eyes are open; we see what we have

to expect. We look for neither mercy nor justice at their hands; if we find any, it will be clear gains.

23. The Second objection is, “Mr. Wesley acknowledged the unguarded manner in which the Minutes were drawn up; and yet immediately after defended them.” I answer, How did I “acknowledge the unguarded manner?” The plain case was this: I seek peace, and would do anything for it, which I can with a safe conscience. On this principle it was, that when Mr. Shirley read over his Declaration, (I say *his*; for it was he drew it up, not I,) and asked, if we agreed thereto, I was heartily desirous to agree with him as far as possible. In order to this, after altering some words, I asked our brethren, if they were willing to sign it. One immediately said, “The Minutes are not unguarded; they are guarded enough.” I said, “They are guarded enough for you; but not for those who seek occasion against us.” And observe, it is only in this sense, that I subscribed to that expression. But I will not affirm, that my love of peace did not carry me a little too far. I know not but it would have been better, not to have signed the paper at all.

24. So much for the Minutes. Perhaps it may be expected, that I should also take some notice of what Mr. Hill says concerning perfection. All his arguments indeed, and ten times more, I have answered over and over. But if it is required, I will answer once more; only premising, by that perfection, to which St. Paul directs Mr. Hill and me to go on, (Hebrews 6:1,) I understand neither more nor less, than what St. John terms “perfect love;” (1 John 4:18;) and our Lord, “loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.” If you choose to call this “sinful perfection,” (rather than sinless,) you have my free leave.

Mr. Hill’s main argument against this is, that “it is Popish doctrine.” How does this appear? O, “Luther says so.” (Page 25.) This will not do; it is only second-hand evidence. “It crept into the Church first in the fifth century, and has been since almost generally received in the Church of Rome.” (Page 49.) How is this proved? either that the doctrine of perfect love crept first into the Church in the fifth century? or, that it has been since almost generally received in the Church of Rome? Why, “we may

very readily perceive this, by the following extract from Bishop Cowper.”
I answer,

(1.) This is but second-hand evidence still.

(2.) It is wide of the mark.

For this whole extract says not a word about the Church of Rome. It contains only a few citations from St. Augustine and St. Bernard, foreign to the present question; and one from St. Ambrose, if it be possible, more foreign still. None of these touch either of the points in question: “This doctrine crept into the Church in the fifth century;” or, “It has been (ever) since almost generally received in the Church of Rome.”

Here I must beg leave to put Mr. Hill in mind of one stated rule in controversy: We are to take no authorities at second-hand, but always recur to the originals. Consequently, words of St. Bernard, or twenty Saints more, copied from Bishop Cowper, prove just nothing. Before we can urge the authority of St. Bernard or Ambrose, we must consult the authors themselves, and tell our readers what edition we use, with the page where the words are found; otherwise they cannot form a judgment either of the fairness of the quotation, or of the sense and weight of it.

Hitherto, then, we have not one tittle of proof, that this is a Popish doctrine; that it ever was, or is now, “almost generally received in the Church of Rome;” (although, if it had, this would be no conclusive argument against it, as neither is it conclusive against the doctrine of the blessed Trinity;) I do not know that it ever was: But this I know; it has been solemnly condemned by the Church of Rome. It has been condemned by the Pope and his whole conclave, even in this present century. In the famous bull *Unigenitus*, (so called from the first words, *Unigenitus Dei filius*,⁴⁸ they utterly condemn the uninterrupted act (of faith and love, which some then talked of, of continually rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks) as dreadful heresy! Now, in what public act of the Church of Rome is the doctrine of perfection maintained? Till this is produced, I pray let us hear no more, that perfection is a Popish doctrine.

25. However, “the distinction between sins and innocent infirmities is derived from the Romish Church.” (Page 56.) How does this appear? Thus: “Two of her devoted champions, Lindenius and Andradius,

distinguish between infirmities and sins.” *Lindenius and Andradius!* Who are they? From what country did they come? I do not know the men. One of them, for aught I know, might serve as an interpreter at the Council of Trent? What then? Was he an authorized interpreter of the doctrines of the Church? Nay, and how do you know that they did speak of “little, trifling faults,” or of “minute and trivial sins?” Did you ever read them? Pray, what edition of their works do you use? and in what page do these words occur? Till we know this, that there may be an opportunity of examining the books, (though I fear scarce worth examining,) it is doing too much honor to such quotations, to take any notice of them at all.

26. Well, now for the buskins! Now, *spirat tragicum satis!*⁴⁹ “And this is the doctrine which is preached to more than thirty thousand souls, of which Mr. W. has the charge. Then I am sure it is high time, that not only the Calvinist Ministers, but all that wish well to the interest of Protestantism,” (so Mr. S. said before,) “should, in a load, protest against such licentious tenets.” “Blow ye the trumpet in Sion!” Gird on your armor! Make ye yourselves ready for battle! Again the trumpet sounds: — A crusade! An holy war! Down with the heretics! But hold! What spirit are you of? Are you followers of peace? Then “bring forth your strong reasons; speak the truth in love,” and we are ready to meet you. But really all this talk of my licentious doctrine is a mere copy of Mr. H.’s countenance. He knows, and all in England know, (whoever have heard my name,) that it is not too loose, but too strict, doctrine I am constantly accused of. Therefore, all this bluster, about my superseding the law, has not only no truth, but no color, no plausibility. And when Mr. H. calls so gravely for Dr. Crisp to “sweep away all my Antinomian rubbish,” shall we laugh or weep?

50
Cuius facilis rigidi censura cachinni.

Rather let us drop a tear on human infirmity.

27. So much for the First grand argument against perfection, that it is “generally received in the Church of Rome.” The Second is: “It was generally received among the ranting Anabaptists in Germany.” (Page 49.)

What author of note testifies this? I allow no second-hand authority; but desire to know what German historian of credit has recorded it; and in what page of his works. When this is ascertained, then we may observe, it proves just nothing.

A Third argument against perfection is, that “it was maintained by many wild Ranters in London.” Wild enough! although no stress is to be laid on Mr. H.’s informations concerning them; some of which are altogether false, and the rest imperfect enough. But suppose they were all true, what would follow? Many hearers abusing the doctrines I teach, no more prove that those doctrines are false, than the German Ranters proved that Luther’s were so.

28. Is it another argument, that “the monstrous doctrine of perfection turns some of its deluded votaries into monsters? This may be proved from the cases of Bell and Harris; the former of whom prophesied that the world would be at an end the last of February; the latter was seized with raving madness, and died blaspheming in a most dreadful manner.” (Page 44.)

It would be strange if George Bell were not brought upon the stage, as he has been an hundred times over. As for poor Benjamin Harris, I believe, as a punishment for his pride and uncharitableness, God permitted him to be struck in an instant with diabolical madness. But it did not continue to his death; he did not die blaspheming. I saw him myself quiet and composed; and be calmly delivered up his soul to God.

See another instance: “A friend of mine lately informed me that an eminent Preacher of perfection told him, that he had not sinned for some years, and that the Holy Ghost had descended and sat on him and many others in a visible manner, as he did upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.” Please to name the man; otherwise an hundred such tales will weigh nothing with men of sense and candor.

Behold a Fourth: “Last year I myself conversed with a gentlewoman of such high perfection, that she said, no man could teach her anything, and went to no place of worship for years together: However, she was a scold,

and beat her maid." Perhaps so. And what is that to me? If she is a member of our society, tell me her name; and she will be in it no longer. This is our glorying. It must be, that many members of our society will, from time to time, grow weary of well doing; yea, that some will fall into sin. But as soon as this appears, they have no more place among us. We regard no man's person, high or low, rich or poor. A disorderly walker cannot continue with us.

Again: "One told God in prayer, that she was perfect, as God himself was perfect. Another prayed, 'Grant, O Lord, that all here present may be perfect, as I am perfect.'" (Page 45.) Till you name the men, this, too, must go for nothing. But suppose it all true, what will it prove? Only that there are madmen in the world.

"I could also tell him of a woman, who was so perfect, that she tried to sin, and could not." Pray name her.

"Mr. W. must also well remember a certain perfect married lady, who was got with child by a perfect Preacher." I do not remember any such thing. I never heard of it before.

29. But "I hate," says Mr. H., "the law of retaliation;" — truly one would not have thought it; — "and would not have mentioned these things, but that you set me the example," that is, but by way of retaliation. "Should you doubt the truth of these instances, I will lead you to the fountain-head of my intelligence." That will not do. In order to be even with Mr. F., you have told seven shocking stories. Several of these I know to be false; I doubt if any, but that of George Bell, be true. And now you offer to lead Mr. F. to the fountain-head of your intelligence! Probably to one or two renegade Methodists, who court the world by slandering their brethren! "But Mr. W. adopts this way." No, never. In my Letter to Mr. Hervey, I occasionally name two famous men; but I do not slander them. In my Journals, I name several others. This is above board; but Mr. H. stabs in the dark. He gives us no names, no places of abode; but casts arrows and firebrands abroad; and, let them light where they may, on guilty or guiltless, of that he takes no care.

30. It remains only, to consider the queries which Mr. H. addresses directly to me: —

- (1.)“Did not you, in administering the sacrament, a few years ago, to a perfect society in West-Street chapel, leave out the Confession?”

Yes, and many times since. When I am straitened for time, (as I generally am there on a Monday,) I begin the Communion-service at, “We do not presume to come to this thy table.” One Monday, Mr. Madan desired to stay. Here, I suppose, is “the fountain-head of this intelligence.”

- (2.)“Did not one of the enthusiasts then say, he had heard a voice telling him, he was all holiness to the Lord?”

Possibly so; but I remember nothing of it.

- (3.)“Did not a second declare the same thing?”

Not that I remember.

- (4.)“Did not George Bell say, he should never die?”

He often did, if not then.

- (5.)“Did not one present confirm it?”

Not unlikely; but I do not remember it.

- (6.)“Did not another perfect brother say, he believed the millennium was near; for there had been more Constables sworn in that year than heretofore?”

Are you sure he was a perfect brother; that is, one that professed so to be? As for me, I can say nothing about it; for I neither remember the man nor the words.

“This I have put down verbatim from the mouth of a judicious friend then present; but from that time he has been heartily sick of sinless perfection.” Say of “perfect love.”

Is it only from that time that Mr. Madan has been sick of it? Was he not sick of it before? And did he then, or at any time since, say one word to me of any of these things? No; but he treasured them up for ten years; and then tells Mr. Hill, that he might tell them to all the world.

(7.)“Do not you know a Clergyman, once closely connected with you, who refused a great witness for perfection the sacrament, because he had been detected in bed with a perfect sister?” No; I never heard of it before. Surely Mr. M——d is not fallen so low, as to invent such a tale as this!

I need not say anything to your last anecdote, since you (for once!) put a candid construction upon my words. If I did speak them, which I can neither affirm nor deny, undoubtedly my meaning was, (as yourself observe,) “Though I have been holding forth the imputed righteousness of Christ to a mixed congregation, yet I think it right to caution you of the society how you abuse that doctrine, which to some, who turn it into licentiousness is a smooth doctrine, of which you ought to beware.” (Page 61.) But your friend, it seems, who gave you this account, did not put so candid a construction on my words.

You say, “He was so struck, as hardly to refrain from speaking to you in the chapel. And from that hour he gave up all connections with you.” That is, he sought a pretense; and he found one!

And now, what does all this amount to? Several persons, who professed high things, degenerated into pride and enthusiasm, and then talked like lunatics, about the time that they renounced connection with me for mildly reproving them. And is this any objection against the existence of that love which they professed, nay, and I verily believe, once enjoyed? though they were afterward “moved from their steadfastness.” Surely no more than a justified person’s running mad, is an objection against justification. Every doctrine must stand or fall by the Bible. If the perfection I teach agree with this, it will stand, in spite of all the enthusiasts in the world; if not, it cannot stand.

31. I now look back on a train of incidents that have occurred for many months last past, and adore a wise and gracious Providence, ordering all things well! When the Circular Letter was first dispersed throughout Great Britain and Ireland, I did not conceive the immense good which God was about to bring out of that evil. But no sooner did Mr. F.'s first Letters appear, than the scene began to open. And the design of Providence opened more and more, when Mr. S.'s Narrative, and Mr. H.'s Letters, constrained him to write and publish his Second and Third Check to Antinomianism. It was then indisputably clear, that neither my brother nor I had born a sufficient testimony to the truth. For many years, from a well-meant, but ill-judged, tenderness, we had suffered the reprobation Preachers (vulgarly called Gospel Preachers) to spread their poison, almost without opposition. But at length they have awakened us out of sleep; Mr. H. has answered for all his brethren, roundly declaring, that "any agreement with election-doubters is a covenant with death." It is well: We are now forewarned and fore-armed. We look for neither peace nor truce with any who do not openly and expressly renounce this diabolical sentiment. But since God is on our side, we will not fear what man can do unto us. We never before saw our way clear, to do any more than act on the defensive. But since the Circular Letter has sounded the alarm, has called forth all their hosts to war; and since Mr. H. has answered the call, drawing the sword, and throwing away the scabbard; what remains, but to own the hand of God, and make a virtue of necessity? I will no more desire any Arminian, so called, to remain only on the defensive. Rather chase the fiend, Reprobation, to his own hell, and every doctrine connected with it. Let none pity or spare one limb of either speculative or practical Antinomianism; or of any doctrine that naturally tends thereto, however veiled under the specious name of free grace; — only remembering, that however we are treated by men, who have a dispensation from the vulgar rules of justice and mercy, we are not to fight them at their own weapons, to return railing for railing. Those who plead the cause of the God of love, are to imitate Him they serve; and, however provoked, to use no other weapons than those of truth and love, of Scripture and reason.

32. Having now answered the queries you proposed, suffer me, Sir, to propose one to you; the same which a gentleman of your own opinion

proposed to me some years since: "Sir, how is it that as soon as a man comes to the knowledge of the truth, it spoils his temper?" That it does so, I had observed over and over, as well as Mr. J. had. But how can we account for it? Has the truth (so Mr. J. termed what many love to term *the doctrine of free grace*) a natural tendency to spoil the temper? to inspire pride, haughtiness, superciliousness? to make a man "wiser in his own eyes, than seven men that can render a reason?" Does it naturally turn a man into a cynic, a bear, a Toplady? Does it at once set him free from all the restraints of good nature, decency, and good manners? Cannot a man hold *distinguishing grace*, as it is called, but he must distinguish himself for passion, sourness, bitterness? Must a man, as soon as he looks upon himself to be an absolute favorite of Heaven, look upon all that oppose him as Diabolonians, as predestinated dogs of hell? Truly, the melancholy instance now before us would almost induce us to think so. For who was of a more amiable temper than Mr. Hill, a few years ago? When I first conversed with him in London, I thought I had seldom seen a man of fortune who appeared to be of a more humble, modest, gentle, friendly disposition. And yet this same Mr. H., when he has once been grounded in "the knowledge of the truth," is of a temper as totally different from this, as light is from darkness! He is now haughty, supercilious, disdaining his opponents as unworthy to be set with the dogs of his flock! He is violent, impetuous, bitter of spirit! in a word, the author of the Review!

O Sir, what a commendation is this of your doctrine! Look at Mr. H., the Arminian! the loving, amiable, generous, friendly man. Look at Mr. H., the Calvinist! Is it the same person? this spiteful, morose, touchy man? Alas, what has "the knowledge of the truth" done? What a deplorable change has it made! Sir, I love you still; though I cannot esteem you as I did once. Let me entreat you, if not for the honor of God, yet for the honor of your cause, avoid, for the time to come, all anger, all spite, all sourness and bitterness; all contemptuous usage of your opponents, not inferior to you, unless in fortune. "O put on again bowels of mercies, kindness, gentleness, long-suffering; endeavoring to hold," even with them that differ from you in opinion, the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!"

BRISTOL, September 9, 1772.

SOME REMARKS

ON

MR. HILL'S "FARRAGO DOUBLE-DISTILLED."

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Romans 12:18.

1. IT is far from my design to give a particular answer to everything contained in Mr. Hill's late treatise. I intend only to offer to the impartial reader a few cursory remarks, which may partly explain and partly confirm what I have already said upon the subject.

2. "Poor Mr. Wesley," says Mr. Hill, opening his cause with native eloquence, "has published various tracts, out of which Mr. Hill collects above an hundred gross contradictions. At this Mr. W.'s temper is much ruffled;" (I believe not; I am not sensible of it;) "he primes, cocks, and fires at Calvinism; and there is smoke and fire in plenty. But if you can bear the stench, (which indeed is very nauseous,) there is no danger of being wounded. He calls this last cannon, or pop-gun, 'Remarks' on my Review. Men of sense say, it is quite unfit for duty; men of grace compassionate the caster of it; men of pleasantry laugh heartily at it; but some good old women speak highly of it." (Pages 3-5.) I give this passage at some length, as a genuine specimen of Mr. Hill's manner of writing.

3. But as Mr. Hill did not "choose to perplex his name, it argued no great proof of Mr. W.'s politeness, to address him in the personal manner he has done." Which of us began? Was it not Mr. Hill? Did not he address me in a personal manner first? And some, beside the old women, are of opinion, he did not do it in the politest manner in the world.

4. "Mr. W. would have us know, that his piece is written in much love. But what love? Love to his own inconsistencies; love of scolding, love of abuse. Let the reader find out any other sort of love through the whole performance." In order to judge whether I wrote in love or no, let any one read the words he has picked out of fifty-four pages, just as they stand connected with others in each page; it will then appear they are not contrary either to love or meekness.

5. But Mr. W. says, Mr. Hill "is unworthy the name either of the gentleman or the Christian; and is amazed that Mr. Hill should lay claim to either of those titles." (Page 6.) Not so. It is my belief that Mr. Hill is both a gentleman and a Christian; though I still think, in his treatment of Mr. Fletcher and me, he has acted beneath his character. Yet it is very likely, "a friend of yours" (not mine) "might say, I wrote in much wrath." (Page 7.) I wrote then in just as much wrath as I do now; though your friend might think otherwise.

6. Nay, but Mr. W. "gives all the Calvinist Ministers the most scurrilous, Billingsgate language, while he is trumpeting forth his own praises, in Mr. F.'s 'Second Check to Antinomianism.'" (Page 8.) A small mistake. I do not give Billingsgate language to anyone: I have not so learned Christ. Every one of those Hymns, out of which Mr. Hill culls the harshest expressions, are not mine, but my brother's. Neither do I trumpet forth my own praises. Mr. Hill's imagining I do, arises from an innocent mistake. He continually takes for granted that I read over and correct all Mr. F.'s books before they go to the press. So far from it, that the "Fourth Check to Antinomianism" I have not read over to this day. But Mr. W. "thinks himself to be the greatest Minister in the world." Exceedingly far from it. I know many now in England, at whose feet I desire to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus.

7. To that question, "Why does a man fall upon me, because another gave him a good beating?" Mr. Hill answers, "If your trumpet had not given the alarm, we should not have prepared ourselves for the battle." (Page 53.) Nay, truly, not mine, but Mr. Shirley's. I was sitting quietly in my study, on the other side of St. George's channel, when his trumpet gave the alarm. Yet I say again, I am not now sorry for these disputes, though I was sorry.

You say, truly, “Mr. W.’s temper has been manifested” hereby. (Page 56.) Let all candid men judge between us, whether Mr. F. and I, on the one hand, or Mr. Hill on the other, has shown more “meekness and lowliness;” and which of us has expressed the greatest heat, and the most cordial contempt of his opponent.

Mr. H. adds: “Hereby Mr. Charles Wesley’s Calvinism is exposed by Mr. John.” Then that is exposed which never existed; for he never was a Calvinist yet. And “hereby,” Mr. H. says, “the ‘Christian Library’ is given up as nothing.” Mere finesse! Everyone sees my meaning, but those that will not see it: It is nothing to your purpose; it proves nothing of what it is brought to prove. In the same sense I set the word *nothing* over against the citations from Mr. Baster and Goodwin.

8. If Mr. Hill says he always was a Calvinist, I have no right to contradict him. But I am sure he was of a widely different temper from that he has shown in his late writings. I allow much to his belief, that, in exposing me to the utmost of his power, he is doing God service. Yet I must needs say, if I were writing against a Turk or a Pagan, I durst not use him as Mr. Hill does me. And if I really am (which will one day appeal) employing all my time, and labor, and talents (such as they are) for this single end, that the kingdom of Christ may be set up on earth; then He whom I serve in the gospel of his Son, will not commend him for his present work.

9. But what makes Mr. Hill so warm against me? I still believe it is for this chiefly, — because I am an Arminian, an election-doubter. For, says he, the “good old Preacher places all election-doubters” (that is, those who are not clear in the belief of absolute predestination) “among the numerous hosts of the Diabolonians. One of these being brought before the Judge, the Judge tells him he must die.” (*Review*, page 35.) That is, plainly, he must die eternally for this damnable sin. I beg Mr. Hill to explain himself on this head. Does he still subscribe to the sentence of this “good old Preacher?” Are all election-doubters to be placed among the Diabolonians? Is the sentence irreversibly passed, that they must all die eternally? I must insist on Mr. Hill’s answering this question: If not, silence gives consent.

10. Mr. H. farther affirms: "The only cement of Christian union is the love of God. And the foundation of that love must be laid, in believing the truths of God;" (that is, you must believe particular redemption, or it is impossible you should love God;) for, to use "the words of Dr. Owen, in his 'Display of Arminianism,'" (see what truths Mr. H. means,) "an agreement without truth is no peace, but a covenant with death, and a conspiracy against the kingdom of Christ.'" (Page 39.) Here again I beg an explicit answer. Will Mr. H. affirm this in cool blood? If he will, there needs no more to account for his enmity both to me and the Minutes. "Nay, but the foundation is struck at by those wretched Minutes." (Page 52.) True, the foundation of Calvinism. So I observed before. I know it well. If the Minutes stand, Calvinism falls. But Mr. Hill says, "The doctrines of election and perseverance are very little, indeed scarcely at all, dwelt on in the 'Review.'" Now, I think they are very much dwelt on therein, and desire any that have eyes to judge.

11. We come now to the main question: Is the "Farrago" true or false? I aver it to be totally false; except in one single article, out of an hundred and one. I mean, Mr. H. has not proved that I contradict myself, except in that single instance. To come to particulars: —

I.

"1. There was an everlasting covenant between the Father and Son, concerning man's redemption." vs. "There never was such a covenant."

The former proposition is taken from the "Christian Library;" on which Mr. H. Says again, "Mr. W. affirms that the Christian Library is 'all true, all agreeable to the word of God.'" I answered before, "I do not. My words are: 'I have endeavored to extract such a collection of English divinity, as I believe is all true, all agreeable to the oracles of God.'" (*Christian Library, preface*, p. 4.) I did believe, and do believe, every tract therein to be true and agreeable to the oracles of God. But I do not roundly affirm this of every sentence contained in the fifty volumes. I could not possibly affirm it, for two reasons:

- (1.) I was obliged to prepare most of those tracts for the press, just as I could snatch time in traveling; not transcribing them, (none expected it of me,) but only marking the lines with my pen, and altering a few words here and there, as I had mentioned in the preface.
- (2.) As it was not in my power to attend to the press, that care necessarily devolved on others; through whose inattention an hundred passages were left in, which I had scratched out. It is probable too, that I myself might overlook some sentences which were not suitable to my own principles. It is certain the correctors of the press did this in not a few instances. The plain inference is, if there are an hundred passages in the ‘Christian Library’ which contradict any or all of my doctrines, these are no proofs that I contradict myself. Be it observed once for all, therefore, citations from the ‘Christian Library’ prove nothing but the carelessness of the correctors.” (*Remarks*, page 381.)

12. Yet Mr. Hill, as if he had never seen a word of this, or had solidly refuted it, gravely tells us again, “If Mr. W. may be credited, the ‘Farrago’ is all true; part of it being taken out of his own ‘Christian Library,’ in the preface of which he tells us that the contents are ‘all true, all agreeable to the oracles of God.’ Therefore, every single word of it is his own, either by birth or adoption.” (*Farrago*, p. 12.) No; I never adopted, I could not adopt, “every single word” of the “Christian Library.” It was impossible I should have such a thought, for the reasons above mentioned.

But “there is very great evasion,” says Mr. H., “in Mr. W.’s saying that though he believes ‘every tract to be true,’ yet he will not be answerable for ‘every sentence or expression in the Christian Library;’ whereas the matter by no means rests upon a few sentences or expressions, but upon whole treatises, which are diametrically opposite to Mr. W.’s present tenets; particularly the treatises of Dr. Sibbs, Dr. Preston, Bishop Beveridge, and Dr. Owen on indwelling sin.” (Page 16.)

13. Just before, Mr. H. affirmed, “Every single word in the ‘Christian Library’ is his own.” Beaten out of this hold, he retreats to another; but it is as untenable as the former: “The matter,” he says, “does not rest on a

few sentences; whole treatises are diametrically opposite to his present tenets." He instances in the works of Dr. Sibbs, Preston, Beveridge, and a treatise of Dr. Owen's.

I join issue with him on this point. Here I pin him down. The works of Dr. Preston and Sibbs are in the ninth and tenth volumes of the Library; that treatise of Dr. Owen's in the seventeenth; that of Bishop Beveridge in the forty-seventh. Take which of them you please; suppose the last, Bishop Beveridge's "Thoughts upon Religion." Is this whole treatise "diametrically opposite to my present tenets?" The "Resolutions" take up the greatest part of the book; every sentence of which exactly agrees with my present judgment; as do at least nine parts in ten of the preceding "Thoughts," on which those Resolutions are formed. Now, what could possibly induce a person of Mr. Hill's character, a man of a good understanding, and of a generous temper, a well-bred gentleman, and a serious Christian, to violate all the rules of justice and truth, which at other times he so earnestly defends, by positively, deliberately, roundly asserting so entire a falsehood, merely to blacken one who loves his person, who esteems his character, and is ready to serve him in anything within his power? What, but so violent an attachment to his opinion, as, while that is in danger, suspends all his faculties, so that he neither can feel, nor think, nor speak like himself?

14. In the ninth and tenth volumes are two treatises of Dr. Preston's, — "The Breastplate of Faith and Love," and "The New Covenant." Is either of these "diametrically opposite to my present tenets?" By no means. If a few sentences here and there (and this I only suppose, not grant) were carelessly left in, though I had scratched them out, which seem (perhaps only seem) to contradict them, these are not the whole tracts; the general tenor of which I still heartily subscribe to.

The tenth volume likewise contains two sermons of Dr. Sibbs's, and his tract upon Solomon's Song. Are any of these "diametrically opposite to my present tenets?" No more than those of Dr. Preston's. I as willingly as ever subscribe to these also.

Is Dr. Owen's tract, "Of the Remainder of Indwelling Sin in Believers," "diametrically opposite to my present tenets?" So far from it, that a few years since I published a sermon on the very same subject. I hope there is no room to charge me with "quirk, quibble, artifice, evasion," on this head; (though I believe as much as on any other;) I use only plain, manly reasoning; and such logic I am not ashamed to avow before the whole learned world.

15. But "I will go farther still," says Mr. H.: "Let Mr. W. only bring me twenty lines together, out of the writings of those four eminent Divines, as they stand in the 'Christian Library;' and I will engage to prove that he has twenty times contradicted them in some of his other publications." (Page 19.) Agreed: I bring him the following twenty lines with which Dr. Preston begins his treatise called "The New Covenant:" —

"These words of God to Abraham contain a precept of sincerity, or perfect walking with God: 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.' And also the motive thereunto, God's all-sufficiency: 'I am God all-sufficient.' As if he should say, 'If there were any defect in me, if thou didst need or couldest desire anything that were not to be had in me, and thou mightest have it elsewhere, perhaps thy heart might be imperfect in walking towards me. Thou mightest then step out from me, to take in advantages elsewhere. But seeing I am all-sufficient; since I have enough in me to fulfill all thy desires; since I am every way an adequate object, so that all thy soul can wish for thou mayest have in me; why then shouldest thou not consecrate thyself to me? Why then shouldest thou be uneven in thy ways, serving me sometimes, and sometimes the creature? For there is nothing in the creature, but thou mayest find in me.' 'I am all-sufficient; therefore, walk before me, and be thou perfect!'" (*Christian Library*, Vol. X., page 47.)

Here are exactly twenty lines, neither more nor less, "as they stand in the 'Christian Library.'" Now, fulfill your engagement; prove that I "have twenty times contradicted them in some other of my publications." If you cannot, acknowledge you have done me wrong. In the heat of your resentment, you have undertaken what you are not able to perform; you

have spoken rashly and unadvisedly; you have gone much too far, far beyond the bounds of wisdom as well as of love.

16. Nay, but “I will go one step farther yet: I defy Mr. Wesley to bring me twenty lines out of the above tracts, by Preston, Sibbs, Owen, and Beveridge, which he now believes.” Is it possible, that Mr. Hill should believe himself, while he is talking at this rate? Or does he expect that anyone else should believe him, unless he be drunk with passion or prejudice? Was ever anything so wild? But I accept of this challenge, and that with more seriousness than it deserves. I will go no farther than the twenty lines cited above: All these I “now believe.” And I believe, as I said before, not only the whole treatise from which those words are taken, but the tenor of the whole “Christian Library.”

Meantime, it has been acknowledged again and again, that several sentences stand therein which I had put out, in my usual manner, by drawing my pen through them. Be it observed, therefore, once more, that those passages prove nothing but the carelessness of the correctors; consequently, all the pains bestowed to collect them together, whether by Mr. Hill or his coadjutors, is absolutely lost labor, and never can prove that I contradict myself.

17. The case is nearly the same with regard to those other tracts which I published many years ago, — Mr. Baxter’s Aphorisms on Justification, and John Goodwin’s tract on the same subject. I have lately read them both over with all the attention I am capable of; and I still believe they contain the true Scripture doctrine concerning justification by faith: But it does not follow, that I am accountable for every sentence contained in either of those treatises.

“But does Mr. Wesley believe the doctrine therein contained, or does he not?” I do; and John Goodwin believed the doctrine contained in the sermon on “The Lord our Righteousness;” the sum of which is, “We are justified, sanctified, and glorified, for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered for us.” Nothing he asserts is inconsistent with this; though it may be inconsistent with passages left in the “Christian Library.” When therefore I write “Nothing” against those passages, or the extracts from

Goodwin, that contradict them, this does not prove, (as Mr. Hill archly says,) that “I have nothing to say,” but that all those passages and extracts put together are nothing to the purpose. For, were it true, that John Goodwin and Richard Baxter contradicted all those passages, it is nothing to the point in hand; it never can prove, that I, John Wesley, contradict myself.

18. But to return to the everlasting covenant: “Mr. Wesley himself, in his Annotations on Genesis 1:1, calls the Elohim, a ‘covenant God.’” True, in covenant with man. But I say not one word of any covenant between the Father and the Son. But “in his note on Isaiah 55:4, speaking of the covenant made between God and David, he says, ‘This David is Christ.’” Undoubtedly I do; but what is this brought to prove? My words are, “I have appointed, and will in due time give him — the David last-mentioned, even Christ — a witness — to declare the will of God concerning the duty and salvation of men, to bear witness to the truth, to confirm God’s promises, and, among others, those which respect the calling of the Gentiles; to be a witness to both parties of that covenant made between God and man.” (Page 209.) Yea, of the “covenant made between God and man!” Of a covenant between the Father and the Son here is not a word.

“The only possible conclusion to be drawn from this defense of Mr. Wesley’s is, that he became a commentator on the Bible before he could read the Bible.” That is pity! If he could not read it when he was threescore years old, I doubt he never will. See the candor, the good-nature, of Mr. Hill! Is this Attic salt, or wormwood?

What conclusion can be possibly drawn in favor of Mr. Hill? The most favorable I can draw is this, that he never read the book which he quotes; that he took the word of some of his friends. But how shall we excuse them? I hope they trusted their memories, not their eyes. But what recompense can he make to me for publishing so gross a falsehood, which, nevertheless, those who read his tract, and not mine, will take to be as true as the gospel?

II.

Of Election and Perseverance.

19. In entering upon this head, I observed, “Mr. Sellon has clearly showed, that the Seventeenth Article does not assert absolute predestination. Therefore, in denying this, I neither contradict that article nor myself.” (*Remarks*, p. 382.)

It lies therefore upon Mr. Hill to answer Mr. Sellon before he witticizes upon me. Let him do this, and he talks to the purpose; otherwise, all the pretty, lively things, he says about Dr. Baroe, Bishop Wilkins, Dr. Clark, and George Bell, are utterly thrown away.

As to George Bell, Mr. Richard says, Mr. M——d “justly censures the enthusiasm and credulity of Mr. John, in paying so much attention to Bell’s ridiculous reveries; in calling him a sensible man, and entreating him to continue in his society, on account of the great good he did. However, Bell refused to remain in connection with him, because of his double-dealings and unfaithful proceedings; for he sometimes was full of Bell’s praises; at other times, he would warn the people against him. He also gives a particular narration of what he rightly calls the ‘comet enthusiasm.’ Mr. John preached more than ten times about the comet, which he supposed was to appear in 1758, to burn up all the produce of the earth, and lastly to execute its grand commission on the globe itself, causing the stars to fall from heaven.” (*Farrago*, p. 37.)

What an heap of dirt is here raked together! I must not let it pass quite unnoticed.

- (1.) He “justly censures the enthusiasm and credulity of Mr. Wesley in paying so much attention to Bell’s ridiculous reveries.” Nay, so very little, that I checked them strongly, as soon as ever they came to my knowledge; particularly his whim about the end of the world, which I earnestly opposed, both in private and public.
- (2) “Bragging of the many miraculous cures he had wrought.” I bragg’d of — that is, simply related, the case of Mary Special, and no other; in the close of which I said, “Here are three plain facts,

— She was ill; she is well; she became so in a moment. Which of these can with any modesty be denied?” I still ask the same question.

- (3.) That I ever called him “a sensible man,” is altogether false. A man of faith and love I then knew him to be; but I never thought him a man of sense.
- (4.) That I “entreated him to continue in the society,” is likewise totally false.
- (5.) Nor did I ever tell him, on that or any other occasion, of “the great good” he did. I know he was an instrument in God’s hands of convincing and converting many sinners. But though I speak this now to all the world, I never spoke it to himself.
- (6.) Neither did he ever refuse, what never was asked, “to remain in connection with me.”
- (7.) Least of all did he refuse it because of my “double-dealings or unfaithful proceedings.” He never mentioned to me any such thing, nor had he any pretense so to do.
- (8.) Nay, but you “was at some times full of Bell’s praises.” Very moderately full. “At other times,” that is, after he ran mad, “you warned the people against him.” I warned them not to regard his prophecies, particularly with regard to the 28th of February.
(*Journal*, Vol. III., p. 130.)

20. “He also gives us a particular narration of what he rightly calls the *comet-enthusiasm*. Mr. John preached more than ten times about the comet he supposed was to appear in 1758, and to consume the globe.” This is a foolish slander, as it is so easily confuted. A tract was published at that very time, entitled, “Serious Thoughts occasioned by the Earthquake at Lisbon.” The thing which I then accidentally mentioned in preaching (twice or thrice; it may be, four times) is there set down at large, much more at large than ever I mentioned it in any sermon. The words are these: —

“Dr. Halley fixes the return of the comet, which appeared in 1682, in the year 1758.” Observe, Dr. Halley does this, not I. On which he adds: “But may the great, good God avert such a shock or contact of such great bodies, moving with such forces, (which, however, is by no means

impossible,) lest this most beautiful order of things be entirely destroyed, and reduced into its ancient chaos.” (*Serious Thoughts*, Vol. XI., pp. 8, 9.)

“But what, if God should not avert this contact? what would the consequence be?” That consequence I afterwards describe: “Burning up all the produce of the earth, and then the globe itself.” But do I affirm, or suppose, that it actually will do this? I suppose, nay, affirm, at the bottom of the same page, the direct contrary: “What security is there against all this, on the infidel hypothesis? But on the Christian there is abundant security; for the prophecies are not yet fulfilled.”

21. So much for the comet-enthusiasm. We return now to the point of unconditional election: “One would imagine,” says Mr. Hill, “by Mr. W.’s quoting the Thirty-first Article, in contradiction to the Seventeenth, that he thought the Reformers as inconsistent as himself.” (*Farrago*, p. 54.) I did not quote the Thirty-first in contradiction to the Seventeenth, but in explication of it. The latter, the Thirty-first, can bear but one meaning; therefore it fixes the sense of the former. “Nay, this Article speaks nothing of the extent of Christ’s death, but of its all-sufficiency.” (Pages 54, 55.) *Nothing of the extent!* Why, it speaks of nothing else; its all-sufficiency is out of the question. The words are: “The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.” It is here affirmed, the death of Christ is a perfect satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world. It would be sufficient for a thousand worlds. But of this the Article says nothing.

But “even Bishop Burnet allows our Reformers to have been zealous Calvinists.” He does not allow them all to be such; he knew and you know the contrary. You cannot but know, that Bishop Ridley, Hooper, and Latimer, to name no more, were firm Universalists.

22. But the contradictions! Where are the contradictions? “Why, sometimes you deny election; yet another time you say, —

‘From all eternity with love
Unchangeable thou hast me view’d.’” (Page 21.)

I answered, “I believe this is true, on the supposition of faith foreseen, not otherwise.”

Here is therefore no contradiction, unless on that supposition, which I do not allow.

But sometimes “you deny the perseverance of the saints. Yet in one place you say, ‘I do not deny that those eminently styled the elect shall persevere.’” I mean those that are perfected in love. So I was inclined to think for many years: But for ten or twelve years I have been fully convinced, that even these may make “shipwreck of the faith.”

23. But “several of Mr. Hill’s quotations are from Mr. Charles Wesley’s Hymns, for which Mr. John says he will not be answerable.”

I will now explain myself on this head. Though there are some expressions in my brother’s Hymns which I do not use, as being very liable to be misconstrued; yet I am fully satisfied, that, in the whole tenor of them, they thoroughly agree with mine, and with the Bible. (2) That there is no jot of Calvinism therein; that not one hymn, not one verse of an hymn, maintains either unconditional election, or infallible perseverance. Therefore, I can readily answer Mr. H.’s question, “How can Mr. W. answer it to his own conscience, to write prefaces and recommendations to Hymns which he does not believe?” There is the mistake. I do believe them; although still I will not be answerable for every expression which may occur therein. But as to those expressions which you quote in proof of final perseverance, they prove thus much, and no more, that the persons who use them have at that time “the full assurance of hope.” Hitherto, then, Mr. Hill has brought no proof that I contradict myself.

III.

Of Imputed Righteousness.

24. “Blessed be God, we are not among those who are so dark in their conceptions and expressions. ‘We no more deny,’ says Mr. W., ‘the

phrase of *imputed righteousness*, than the thing.” (Page 23.) It is true: For I continually affirm, to them that believe, faith is imputed for righteousness. And I do not contradict this, in still denying that phrase, “the imputed righteousness of Christ,” to be in the Bible; or in beseeching both Mr. Hervey and you, “not to dispute for that particular phrase.”

But “since Mr. W. blesses God for enlightening him to receive the doctrine, and to adopt the phrase of ‘imputed righteousness;’ how came he to think that clear conceptions of the doctrine were so unnecessary, and the phrase itself so useless, after having so deeply lamented the dark conceptions of those who rejected the term and the thing?”

It was neither this term, “the imputed righteousness of Christ,” nor the thing which Antinomians mean thereby, the rejection of which I supposed to argue any darkness of conception. But those I think dark in their conceptions, who reject either the Scripture phrase, “faith imputed for righteousness,” or the thing it means.

25. However, to prove his point, Mr. Hill goes on: —

“This doctrine” (of the “imputed righteousness of Christ”) “I have constantly believed and taught for near eight-and-twenty years.” (“The use of the term” (the “imputed righteousness of Christ”) “is not scriptural; it is not necessary; it has done immense hurt.”)

“It has done immense hurt,” says Mr. W.; ‘but here is no contradiction.’ Whether there be or not, there is a plain concession from Mr. W. himself, that he has been preaching a doctrine for eight-and-twenty years together, which has done immense hurt.”

Let this (one instance out of an hundred) be a specimen of Mr. Hill’s fairness! The whole strength of the argument depends on the artful jumbling of two sentences together, and inserting two or three little words into the latter of them.

My words are: “We no more deny the phrase” (of “imputed righteousness”) “than the thing.” (*Remarks*, p. 383.)

“This doctrine I have believed and taught for near eight-and-twenty years.” (*Ibid.*)

These distinct sentences Mr. Hill is pleased to thrust together into one, and to mend thus: —

“This doctrine (of the imputed righteousness of Christ) I have constantly believed and taught for near eight-and twenty years.”

And here, says Mr. H., is a “plain concession from Mr. W. himself, that he has been preaching a doctrine for twenty-eight years together, which has done immense hurt.”

No, the doctrine which I believe has done immense hurt, is that of the imputed righteousness of Christ in the Antinomian sense. The doctrine which I have constantly held and preached is, that faith is imputed for righteousness.

And when I have either in that sermon or elsewhere said, that “the righteousness of Christ is imputed to every believer,” I mean, every believer is justified for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered. Yet still I think, “there is no use in contending for that particular phrase.” And I say still, “I dare not insist upon it, because I cannot find it in the Bible.”

To contradict this, Mr. H. cites these words: “‘This is fully consistent with our being justified, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness.’ Mr. W.’s notes on Romans 4:9.” Mr. H. adds: “These two, taken together, produce the following conclusion, that it is perfectly consistent to say, that we are justified by that which cannot be found in the Bible.” (*Farrago*, p. 24.)

That note runs thus: “‘Faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness.’ This is fully consistent with our being justified through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ: That is, our being pardoned, and accepted of God, for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered. For though this, and this alone, be the meritorious cause of our acceptance with God, yet

faith may be said to be ‘imputed to us for righteousness,’ as it is the sole condition of our acceptance.”

Now, is there any shadow of contradiction in this? or of our being justified by that which cannot be found in the Bible?

26. “Mr. W. frequently puts the expression, ‘imputed righteousness,’ in the mouth of a whole congregation. Yet he says, ‘I dare not require any to use it.’” Hence Mr. Hill deduces these two conclusions: —

- (1.) “That Mr. W. gives out such doctrines as he dares not require any others to believe.” (Page 25.)

By what logic is this deduced? We are not speaking of doctrines at all, but simply of a particular expression. And that expression is not “imputed righteousness,” but “the imputed righteousness of Christ.”

- (2.) “That a whole congregation may have words in their mouths, and yet be all silent.”

Well inferred again! But did I say, “A whole congregation had those words in their mouths?” I did not either say or suppose it; any more than that they were all silent.

“Will Mr. W. be ingenuous enough to tell me, whether he did not write this when he was last in a certain country, which abounds with *crassa ingenia*?”⁵¹ I will. I did not write this in the fogs of Ireland, but in the clear air of Yorkshire.

27. The two next propositions Mr. Hill quotes, are, “They to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed,” (I mean, who truly believe,) “are made righteous by the Spirit of Christ; are renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.”

“The nice, metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness” (if it is not carefully guarded) “leads not to repentance, but to licentiousness. I have known a thousand instances of this.”

And where is the contradiction between these propositions? “It is just this,” says Mr. Hill, “that the doctrine of imputed righteousness makes those who believe it both holy and unholy.” (Page 26.)

Unfold the propositions a little more, and then let any man judge.

The First means just this: They whom God justifies, for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered, (whether they ever heard of that phrase, “imputing the righteousness of Christ,” or not,) are sanctified by his Spirit; are renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

The Second means: I have known very many who so rested in the doctrine of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, that they were quite satisfied without any holiness at all.

Now, where is the contradiction?

But my inserting in my own sentence those explanatory words, “I mean, who truly believe,” Mr. H. calls an interpolation; and supposes I “mean to make a distinction between faith in Christ, and faith in the righteousness of Christ.” I mean just what I have said again and again, particularly in the note above cited. And this is the very thing which John Goodwin means, as he declares over and over.

Mr. W. “winds up this point of imputed righteousness with a resolution which astonishes me, that ‘he will never more use the phrase, *the imputed righteousness of Christ*, unless it occur to him in a hymn, or steal upon him unawares.’” This is my resolution. I repeat once more what I said in the “Remarks:” “The thing, that we are justified merely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered, I have constantly and earnestly maintained above four-and-thirty years. And I have frequently used the phrase, hoping thereby to please others ‘for their good to edification.’ But it has had a contrary effect, since so many improve it into an objection.

Therefore I will use it no more.” (I mean, the phrase *imputed righteousness*; that phrase, *the imputed righteousness of Christ*, I never did use.) “I will endeavor to use only such phrases as are strictly scriptural. And I will advise all my brethren, all who are in connection with me throughout the three kingdoms, to lay aside that ambiguous, unscriptural phrase, (*the imputed righteousness of Christ*,) which is so liable to be misinterpreted, and speak in all instances, this in particular, as the oracles of God.”

IV.

Of a two-fold Justification.

My words cited as contradicting this, run thus: —

28. “In the afternoon I was informed how many wise and learned men, who cannot in terms deny it, (because our Articles and Homilies are not yet repealed,) explain justification by faith: They say, Justification is two-fold, the First in this life, the Second at the last day, etc. In opposition to this, I maintain, that the justification spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, and in our Articles, is not two-fold; it is one, and no more.” (*Remarks*, page 388.) True. And where do I contradict this? Where do I say, the justification spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, and in our Articles, is any more than one? The question between them and me concerned this justification, and this only, which I affirmed to be but one. They averred, “But there is a second justification at the last day; therefore justification is not one only.” Without entering into that question, I replied, “The justification whereof St. Paul and our Articles speak, is one only.” And so I say still; and yet I do not deny that there is another justification (of which our Lord speaks) at the last day.

I do not therefore condemn the distinction of a two-fold justification, in saying, That spoken of in our Articles is but one. And this is the thing which I affirmed, in “flat opposition to those men.”

29. But “how is it possible to encounter such a man as this, without watching him through every line? And therefore I wish my readers would closely compare the ‘Remarks’ with the ‘Review’ itself;” (I desire no more. Whoever does this, will easily discern on which side the truth lies;) “as it is impracticable to point out half the little arts of this kind which Mr. W. has stooped to.” That is, in civil terms, “Sir, you are a knave.” Sir, I crave your mercy. I stoop to no art, but that of plain, sound reasoning. By this art, and by this alone, I am able to untwist truth from falsehood, how skillfully soever they are woven together. I dare use no other; for (whether you know it or no) I fear God. And by his grace, in simplicity and godly sincerity I have my conversation in the world.

“But how agrees this with what Mr. W. tells us, that he has never contradicted himself with regard to justification, since the year 1738?” (*Farrago*, p. 39.) Perfectly well. “How long has he held that justification is fourfold?” I have said nothing about it yet. “And how will he reconcile this with its being twofold, and with his preceding affirmation, that it is one and no more?” When time is, this mystery too may be cleared up.

V.

Of a Justified State.

30. Mr. W. says, “The state of a justified person is inexpressibly great and glorious.” (Page 34.)

“Yet he asks elsewhere, ‘Does not talking of a justified or sanctified state, tend to mislead men?’ He answers: ‘It frequently does mislead men;’” namely, when it is spoken of in an unguarded manner. “‘But where is the contradiction?’ Whatever may be the contradiction, this is clearly the conclusion, — that Mr. W., by his own confession, is a misleader of men.”

It is not quite clear yet. You have first to prove that I use the phrase “in an unguarded manner.” I confess, when it is so used, it tends to mislead men; but I do not confess that I use it so.

VI.

Are Works a Condition of Justification?

31. “Mr. W. says, ‘No good works can be previous to justification.’ And yet in the same page he asserts, ‘Whoever desires to find favor with God should cease from evil, and learn to do well.’”

I answered: “Does not the Bible say so? Who can deny it? ‘Nay, but Mr. W. asks, If this be not in order to find favor, what does he do them for?’ And I ask it again. Let Mr. Hill, or anyone else, give me an answer. So if there is any contradiction here, it is not I contradict myself, but Isaiah and our Lord that contradict St. Paul.” (*Remarks*, pages 389, 390.)

Mr. Hill replies: “Then a man may do works in order to find favor, and yet such works cannot be called good.” You may call them so, if you please; but be not angry with me, if I do not. I still believe, no good works can be done before justification. Yet I believe, (and that without the least self contradiction,) that final salvation is “by works as a condition.” And let any one read over the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, and deny it if he can.

VII.

Is Justification by Faith articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiae?

32. In the beginning of the year 1738, I believed it was so. Soon after I found reason to doubt. Since that time I have not varied. “Nay, but in the year 1763 you say, ‘This is the name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness*. A truth this, of which may be affirmed, (what Luther affirms of a truth nearly connected with it, justification by faith,) it is *articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiae*.⁵² It is certainly the pillar and ground of that faith of which alone cometh salvation.” (*Farrago*, page 15.)

I answered: “It is certain, here is a seeming contradiction; but it is not a real one; for these two opposite propositions do not speak of the same thing. The latter speaks of justification by faith; the former, of trusting in the righteousness or merits of Christ. (Justification by faith is only mentioned incidentally in a parenthesis.) Now, although Mr. Law denied justification by faith, he might trust in the merits of Christ. It is this, and this only, that I affirm (whatever Luther does) to be *articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiae*.” (*Remarks*, page 391.)

But Mr. Hill thinks, “justification by faith, and by trusting in the merits of Christ, are all one.” (*Farrago*, page 16.) Be they or not, I still think, “some may doubt of justification by faith, and yet not perish everlastingly.” Does Mr. Hill judge that such an one cannot be saved? that all Mystics (as well as Mr. Law) go to hell?

VIII.

Both Adam’s Sin and Christ’s Righteousness are imputed.

They are; the question is only, In what sense?

IX.

*Of Merit.*⁵³

33. In the Minutes I say, “We are rewarded according to our works, yea, because of our works. (Genesis 22:16, 17.) How differs this from *for the sake of* our works? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*, or ‘as our works deserve?’ Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.” I say so still. Let Mr. Hill, if he can.

“And yet I still maintain,” (so I added in the “Remarks;” so I firmly believe,) “there is no merit, taking the word strictly, but in the blood of

Christ; that salvation is not by the merit of works; and that there is nothing we are or have, or do, which can, strictly speaking, deserve the least thing at God's hand.

"And all this is no more than to say, Take the word merit in a strict sense, and I utterly renounce it; take it in a looser sense, and though I never use it, (I mean, I never ascribe it to any man,) yet I do not condemn it. Therefore, with regard to the word merit, I do not contradict myself at all."

"You never use the word!" says Mr. H.: "What have we then been disputing about?" (*Farrago*, p. 36.) Why, about a straw; namely, whether there be a sense in which others may use that word without blame.

But can Mr. Hill, or anyone living, suppose me to mean, I do not use the word in the present question?

What Mr. H. adds, is a mere play upon words: "Does Mr. W., by this looser merit, mean a merit that does not merit?" Yes; by terming a work meritorious in this improper sense, I do not mean, that it merits or deserves a reward in the proper sense of the word. Instances of the word taken in this improper sense occur all over the Bible.

"This is shamefully evasive." No more than it is Greek. It is a plain, rational, solid distinction; and it holds with regard to numberless words in all languages, which may be taken either in a proper or improper sense.

When I say, "I do not grant that works are meritorious, even when accompanied by faith," I take that word in a proper sense. But others take it in an improper, as nearly equivalent with rewardable. Here, therefore, I no more contradict Mr. Fletcher than I do myself. Least of all do I plead, as Mr. H. roundly affirms, "for justification by the merit of my own good works." (Page 52.)

X.

Of Marriage.

34. “Mr. W. says, his thoughts on a single life are just the same they have been these thirty years.” (I mean, with regard to the advantages which attend that state in general.) “Why then did he marry?” (Page 39.) I answered short, “For reasons best known to himself.” As much as to say, I judge it extremely impertinent for any but a superior to ask me the question. So the harmless raillery which Mr. H. pleases himself with upon this occasion may stand just as it is.

XI.

Concerning Dress.

35. “Mr. W. advises his followers to ‘wear nothing of a glaring color; nothing made in the height of the fashion,’ in order to ‘increase their reward, and brighten their crown in heaven.’

“Nevertheless, in his ‘Letter to a Quaker,’ he says, ‘To make it a point of conscience to differ from others, as to the shape and color of their apparel, is mere superstition.’

“Yet he says, ‘So I advise; but I do not make it a point of conscience.’ It follows, that we are to increase our reward, and brighten our crown in heaven, by doing that which is mere superstition, and without acting from a point of conscience.” (Page 40.)

I shall say more on this head than I otherwise would, in order to show every impartial reader, by one instance in a thousand, the manner wherein Mr. H. continually distorts and murders my words.

In my “Advice to the People called Methodists,” I say, “I would not advise you to imitate the people called Quakers, in those particularities of

dress which can answer no end but to distinguish you from all other people; but I advise you to imitate them in plainness.

(1.) Let your apparel be cheap, not expensive.

(2.) Let it be grave, not gay or showy; not in the point of the fashion.

“Would you have a farther rule? Then take one you may always carry in your bosom: Do everything with a single eye; and this will direct you in every circumstance. Let a single intention to please God prescribe both what clothing you shall buy, and the manner wherein it shall be made, and how you shall put on and wear it. In other words, let all you do in this respect, be so done, that you may offer it to God, a sacrifice acceptable through Jesus Christ; so that, consequently, it may increase your reward, and brighten your crown in heaven.”

Now, is there anything ridiculous in all this? I would appeal even to a rational Deist, whether it be not, upon the Christian scheme, all agreeable to the highest reason?

36. “But it is inconsistent with what you said elsewhere: ‘To make it a point of conscience to differ from others, as the Quakers do, in the shape or color of their apparel, is mere superstition.’”

Not inconsistent at all. It is mere superstition to make wearing a broad-brimmed hat, or a coat with four buttons, (the very thing I referred to in the preceding page,) a point of conscience; that is, a thing necessary to salvation.

“Why then,” says Mr. H., “we are to increase our reward, and brighten our crown in heaven, by doing what is ‘mere superstition,’ and without acting from a ‘point of conscience!’”

Was ever such twisting of words? Has he not great reason to cry out, “O rare *Logica Wesleiensis! Qui bene distinguit bene docet!*” ⁵⁴

No, Sir; what I call “superstition, and no point of conscience,” is wearing a Quaker hat or coat; which is widely different from the plainness of dress that I recommend to the people called Methodists.

My logic, therefore, stands unimpeached; I wish your candor did so too.

I would engage to answer every objection of Mr. H.'s, as fairly and fully as this. But I cannot spare so much time; I am called to other employment.

And I should really think Mr. H. might spend his time better than in throwing dirt at his quiet neighbors.

XII.

Of Tea.

37. "Mr. W. published a tract against drinking tea, and told the tea-drinkers he would set them an example in that piece of self-denial." (*Farrago*, p. 41.)

"I did set them an example for twelve years. Then, at the close of a consumption, by Dr. Fothergill's direction, I used it again." *Remarks*, p. 393.).

"Why then did Mr. W. re-publish this tract, making the world believe it brought a paralytic disorder upon him? "Before I was twenty years old, it made my hand shake, so that I could hardly write. "Is it not strange then, that Dr. Fothergill should advise Mr. W. to use what had before thrown him into the palsy? "I did not say so. I never had the palsy yet; though my hand shook, which is a "paralytic disorder." But be it strange or not, so Dr. F. advised; if you believe not me, you may inquire of himself: The low wit that follows, I do not meddle with; I leave it with the gentle reader.

XIII.

Of Baptism.

38. “Mr. W. says, ‘As there is no clear proof for dipping in Scripture, so there is very probable proof to the contrary.’

“Why then did you at Savannah baptize all children by immersion, unless the parents certified they were weak?” (*Farrago*, p. 42.)

I answered: “Not because I had any scruple, but in obedience to the Rubric.”

Mr. H., according to custom, repeats the objection, without taking the least notice of the answer.

As to the story of half drowning Mrs. L. S., let her aver it to my face, and I shall say more. Only observe, Mr. Toplady is not “my friend.” He is all your own; your friend, ally, and fellow soldier: —

Ut non
55

Compositus melius cum Bitho Bacchius!

You are in truth, *duo fulmina belli*.⁵⁶ It is not strange if their thunder should quite drown the sound of my “poor pop-guns.”

39. “But what surpasses everything else is, that Mr. W. cannot even speak of his contradictions, without contradicting himself afresh. For he absolutely denies, not only that he ever was unsettled in his principles, but that he was ever accused of being so, either by friends or foes.” (Pages 39, 40.) *Either by friends or foes!* I will rest the whole cause upon this. If this be true, I am out of my wits. If it be false, what is Mr. Hill? An honest, upright, sensible man; but a little too warm, and therefore not seeing so clearly in this as in other things.

My words are: “My friends have oftener accused me of being too stiff in my opinions, than too flexible. My enemies have accused me of both, and of everything besides.” (*Remarks*, p 402.) Is this “denying that ever I was accused of inconsistency either by friends or foes.”

I do still deny, that Mr. Delamotte spoke to me “of my wavering, unsettled disposition.” (*Farrago*, p. 43.) But “he spoke to you,” says Mr. Hill, “of something else.” It is very likely he might.

40. Mr. W. is equally self-inconsistent “with regard to the Mystics. These, he tells us, he had once in great veneration,” (I had, two or three and forty years ago,) “as the best explainers of the gospel of Christ. Yet afterwards he declares, he looks upon them as one great Antichrist.” (Page 14.) I did look upon them as such thirty years ago. But in my “Remarks” I say, “I retract this. It is far too strong. But observe, I never contradicted it till now.”

But how does this agree with Mr. W.’s saying, “I never was in the way of Mysticism at all?”

Perfectly well: I admired the Mystic writers. But I never was in their way; leaving off the outward means.

“But why did Mr. W. let the expression stand, ‘Solomon is the chief of the Mystics?’” Perhaps because I thought it an harmless one, and capable of a good meaning. But I observe again: Mr. H. takes it for granted, that I have the correction of Mr. Fletcher’s books. This is a mistake: Of some I have; of others I have not.

41. Now comes the capital instance of self-inconsistency: “In 1770, Mr. W. esteems the Minutes the standard of orthodoxy. In 1771, he signs a paper, owning them to be unguarded. In 1772, he tells us, he does not know but it would have been better, not to have signed that paper at all!” (Page 13.) Suppose all this true, what will it prove? Only that I made a concession which was made an ill use of.

But “Mr. F.’s defense makes poor Mr. W. appear more and more inconsistent. Mr. W. declares the Minutes to be unguarded:” (That is, “not enough guarded” against cavillers:) “Mr. F. defends them, and strives to reconcile them with the Declaration. But then comes Mr. W., and tells us, he does not know, but it had been better not to have signed it at all.” And what then? Why, “here by he intimates, that he has fixed a different sense

upon the Minutes from that which they originally bore.” No such thing; he intimates this and no more, that by that well-intended concession, he had given occasion, to those who sought occasion, of offense against him.

So all this labored charge vanishes into air; and no more proves inconsistency than high-treason.

42. We come now to the main point, perfection; the objections to which spread almost throughout the book. But the question is not, whether the doctrine be true or false; but whether I contradict myself concerning it.

As to what occurs in the fourth and fifth pages, it may therefore suffice to say, I do believe (as you observe) that real Christians (meaning those that are “perfected in love”) are freed from evil or sinful thoughts. And where do I contradict this?

“You say, I cannot prove the facts alleged against some professors of perfection. Indeed I can.” (Page 10.) If you could, that would not prove that I contradict myself on this head.

“But one at Worcester writes, ‘I can send you an account of two or three shocking instances of bad behavior among the professors of perfection here.’” Perhaps so. But will that prove my inconsistency?

43. Awhile since, Mr. Ma——d related to me the whole story of Samuel Wi——n. I know not that I ever heard of it before, but only some imperfect fragments of it. The other story, of “a Preacher of perfection who said, the Holy Ghost visibly descended on all true converts,” may be true for aught I know; but I question much, whether that madman was a Preacher. It may likewise be true, that several wild expressions were uttered at West-street chapel. Yet I think, all these put together will not prove, that I contradict myself.

However, I am glad to read, “If I publish another edition of the Review, these instances shall all be omitted; and personal vilifications shall be left to the sole pen of Mr. W.” Then you will reduce your Farrago to a page,

and your Review to a penny pamphlet. But still “personal vilification” will not suit my pen. I have better employment for it.

44. You say, “Let us now proceed to Mr. W.’s assertions on sinless perfection.” (Page 26.)

As I observed before, I am not now to dispute whether they are right or wrong. I keep therefore to that single point, Do I herein contradict myself, or not?

When I said, “If some of our hymns contradict others,” I did not allow they do. I meant only, if it were so, this would not prove that I contradict myself. “But still it proves, the people must sing contradictions.” Observe, that is, *if*—.

In your account of perfection, blot out “no wandering thoughts.” None in the body are exempt from these. This we have declared over and over; particularly in the sermon wrote upon that subject.

If in the sermon on Ephesians 2:8, (not 11:5, as your blunderer prints it,) the words which I had struck out in the preceding edition, are inserted again, what will this prove? Only that the printer, in my absence, printed, not from the last, but from an uncorrected, copy. However, you are hereby excused from unfairness, as to that quotation. But what excuse have you in the other instance, with regard to Enoch and Elijah? On which I asked, “Why is Mr. Hill so careful to name the first edition? Because in the second the mistake is corrected. Did he know this? And could he avail himself of a mistake which he knew was removed before he wrote” (*Remarks*, p. 395.)

It is now plain he could! Nay, instead of owning his unfairness, he endeavors to turn the blame upon me! “You are as inconsistent in your censures as in your doctrines: You blame me for quoting the last edition of your Sermon; whereas you call me to account for quoting the first edition of your Notes, concerning Enoch and Elijah; each of whom you have proved, by a peculiar rule of Foundery-logic, to be both in heaven and out of heaven.” So, without any remorse, nay, being so totally unconcerned as

even to break jests on the occasion, you again “avail yourself of a mistake which you knew was removed before you wrote.”

45. But Mr. Wesley “hath both struck out some words, and put in others, into the sermon.” This is a common complaint with Mr. Hill, on which therefore it is needful to explain.

I generally abridge what I answer; which cannot be done without striking out all unessential words. And I generally put into quotations from my own writings, such words as I judge will prevent mistakes.

Now to the contradictions: —

“If we say we have no sin’ now remaining,” (I mean, after we are justified,) “we deceive ourselves.”

I believe this; and yet I believe,

“Sin shall not always in our flesh remain.”

Again:

“Many infirmities do remain.”

This I believe; and I believe also,

“‘He that is born of God,’ (and ‘keepeth himself,’ 1 John 5:18,) ‘sinneth not’ by infirmities, whether in act, word, or thought.”

I believe likewise, that in those perfected in love,

“No wrinkle of infirmity,
No spot of sin remains.”

My brother, at the bottom of the page, expressly says, “No sinful infirmity.” So whether this be scriptural or not, here is no contradiction.

I have spoken so largely already concerning sins of surprise and infirmity, that it is quite needless to add any more. I need only refer to the “Remarks,” at the 399th and following pages.

46. But to go on:

“I wrestle not now.”

This is an expression of my brother’s, which I do not subscribe to.

“We wrestle not with flesh and blood.’

“This he allows to be his own.” (Page 31.)

Indeed I do not; although, it is true, “the perpetual war which I speak of in the note on Ephesians 6:13, is a war with principalities and powers, but not with flesh and blood.” “But either way, Mr. John is stuck fast in the mire. For in his ‘Remarks,’ he contradicts his brother; in his Annotations, he contradicts himself; and in his Hymn, he contradicts both his brother and himself.”

Mr. John is not quite *stuck fast* yet; for this is a mistake from beginning to end.

- (1.) I do not contradict my brother in my “Remarks.” In saying, “I do not subscribe to that expression,” I mean, I do not make it my own; I do not undertake to defend it. Yet neither do I enter the lists against it; it is capable of a sound meaning.
- (2.) I do not contradict myself in the note; let him prove it that can.
- (3.) I contradict nobody in the hymn; for it is not mine.

Again: “I never said,

‘While one evil thought can rise,
I am not born again.’

My brother said so once; but he took the words in too high a sense.” I add, and in a sense not warranted by the Bible. And yet I believe, that “real

Christians, I mean those perfected in love, are freed from evil or sinful thoughts.”

“But is not a babe in Christ born again? Is he not a real Christian?” He is doubtless born again; and in some sense he is a real Christian; but not in the sense above defined.

47. We come now to the additional contradictions which Mr. Hill undertakes to find in my writings. They are already dwindled into one; and I hope to show quickly, this one is none at all. It stands thus: —

“Most express are the words of St. John: ‘We know, that whosoever is born of God sinneth not.’”

“Indeed, it is said, This means only, he doth not commit sin willfully or habitually.”

(Observe. I do not deny the text to mean this; but I deny that it means this only.)

As a contradiction to this, Mr. Hill places these words in the opposite column: —

“The Apostle John declares, ‘Whosoever is born of God sinneth not,’

(1.) By any habitual sin; nor,

(2.) By any willful sin.”

True; but do I say, the Apostle means this only? Otherwise, here is no contradiction. So, although you have got the gallows ready, you have not turned off old Mordecai yet. As you so frequently give me that appellation, I for once accept of your favor.

48. “Before I quit this subject,” (of perfection,) “I cannot help expressing my astonishment, that Mr. Wesley should deny that his tenets on that point exactly harmonize with those of the Popish Church; since all the decrees and books that have been published by the Roman Clergy prove this matter beyond a doubt.”

I believe you have been told so. But you should not assert it, unless from personal knowledge. "Alexander Ross says so;" What is Alexander Ross? See with your own eyes. "Mr. Hervey too gives an account of Lindenus and Andradius." Second-hand evidence still. Have you seen them yourself? Otherwise, you ought not to allow their testimony. As to that "most excellent and evangelical work," as you term it, the Eleven Letters ascribed to Mr. Hervey, Mr. Sellon has abundantly shown, that they are most excellently virulent, scurrilous, and abusive; and full as far from the evangelical spirit, as the Koran of Mahomet.

"But Bishop Cowper" — I object to him, beside his being a hot, bitter Calvinist, that he is a dull, heavy, shallow writer. And let him be what he may, all you cite from him is but second-hand authority. "Nay, I refer to the Bishop's own words." But still, you have only the words at second-hand. In order to know the tenets of the Church of Rome, you must read the Romish authors themselves. Nay, it does not suffice to read their own private authors. They will disown anything we charge them with, unless we can prove it by recurring to their public and authentic records. Such are the "*Canones et Decreta Concilii Tridentini*." Such the "*Catechismus ad Parochos*." Till you have read these at least, you should never undertake to determine what is, or what is not, Popery.

49. "But as I am now on the subject of Popery, I must make a few animadversions on what Mr. Wesley affirms, 'I always thought the tenets of the Church of Rome were nearer by half to Mr. Hill's tenets, than to Mr. Wesley's.'" (Page 33.) Nay, give the honor of this to its true author: Mr. Hill goes to consult a Popish Friar at Paris, a Benedictine Monk, one Father Walsh, concerning the Minutes of the Conference. Father Walsh (Mr. Hill says; and I see no reason to scruple his authority here) assures him that the Minutes contain false doctrine; and that the tenets of the Church of Rome are nearer by half to his (Mr. Hill's) tenets than they are to Mr. Wesley's. (So Mr. Hill himself informs the world, in the Paris Conversation, of famous memory, which I really think he would never have published, unless, as the vulgar say, the devil had owed him a shame.) I add, "Truly, I always thought so." But I am the more confirmed therein, by the authority of so competent a judge; especially when his judgment is publicly delivered by so unexceptionable a witness.

50. Nay, but “you know, the principles of the Pope and of John Calvin are quite opposite to each other.” I do not know that they are opposite at all in this point. Many Popes have been either Dominicans or Benedictines: And many of the Benedictines, with all the Dominicans, are as firm Predestinarians as Calvin himself. Whether the present Pope is a Dominican, I cannot tell: If he is, he is far nearer your tenets than mine.

Let us make the trial with regard to your ten propositions: —

- (1.)“You deny election.” (“So does the Pope of Rome.” I know not that. Probably he holds it.)
- (2.)“You deny perseverance.” (“So does the Pope of Rome.” That is much to be doubted.)
- (3.)“You deny imputed righteousness.” (Perhaps the Pope of Rome does; but I assert it continually.)
- (4.)“You hold free will.” (“So does the Pope of Rome.” No; not as I do; (unless he is a Predestinarian: Otherwise,) he ascribes it to nature, I to grace.)
- (5.)“You hold that works are a condition of justification.” (If you mean good works, I do not.)
- (6.)“You hold a twofold justification; one now, another at the last day.” (“So does the Pope of Rome.” And so do all Protestants, if they believe the Bible.)
- (7.)“You hold the doctrine of merit.” (I do not. Neither does the Pope, if Father Walsh says true.)
- (8.)“You hold sinless perfection.” (“So does the Pope.” I deny that. How do you prove it?

(9.)“You hold, that sins are only infirmities.” (I hold no such thing; and you know it well.)

(10.) “You distinguish between venial and mortal sins.” (Not so; I abhor the distinction.)

Now, let every man of understanding judge, whether Father Walsh did not speak the very truth.

51. “This pamphlet was finished, when I was told, that Mr. W. had lately a very remarkable dream, which awakened him out of a sound sleep. This dream he communicated to his society. It was in substance as follows: — A big, rough man came to him, and gave him a violent blow upon the arm with a red-hot iron.

“Now, the interpretation thereof I conceive to be as follows: —

“(1.) The big, rough man is Mr. Hill:

“(2.) The bar of iron” (red-hot!) “is *Logica Wesleyensis*:

(3.)The blow denotes the shock which Mr. John will receive by the said pamphlet:

(4.)His being awakened out of a sound sleep, signifies there is yet hope, that he will, some time or other, come to the right use of his spiritual faculties.” (Page 61.)

Pretty, and well devised! And though it is true I never had any such dream since I was born, yet I am obliged to the inventor of it; and that on many accounts.

I am obliged to him,

(1.)For sending against me only a big, rough man; it might have been a lion or a bear:

(2.)For directing the bar of iron only to my arm; it might have been my poor skull:

- (3.)For letting the big man give me only one blow; had he repeated it, I
had been slain outright: And,
(4.)For hoping I shall, some time or other, come to the right use of my
spiritual faculties.

52. Perhaps Mr. Hill may expect that I should make him some return for
the favor of his heroic poem: But

Certes I have, for many days,
Sent my poetic herd to graze.

And had I not, I should have been utterly unable to present him with a
parallel. Yet, upon refection, I believe I can; although I own it is rather of
the lyric than the heroic kind. And because possibly he may be inclined to
write notes on this too, I will tell him the origin of it. One Sunday,
immediately after sermon, my father's clerk said, with an audible voice,
“Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, an hymn of mine own
composing.” It was short and sweet, and ran thus: —

King William is come home, come home!
King William home is come!
Therefore let us together sing
The hymn that's call'd Te D'um!

53. Before I conclude, I beg leave, in my turn, to give you a few advises:
—

And,

- (1.)Be calm. Do not venture into the field again till you are master of
your temper. You know, “the wrath of man worketh not the
righteousness,” neither promotes the truth, “of God.”
(2.)Be good-natured. Passion is not commendable; but ill-nature still
less. Even irrational anger is more excusable than bitterness, less
offensive to God and man.

- (3.) Be courteous. Show good manners, as well as good nature, to your opponent, of whatever kind. "But he is rude." You need not be so too. If you regard not him, reverence yourself.

Absolutely contrary to this is the crying out at every turn, 'Quirk! Sophistry! Evasion! "In controversy these exclamations go for nothing. This is neither better nor worse than calling names.

- (4.) Be merciful. When you have gained an advantage over your opponent, do not press it to the uttermost. Remember the honest Quaker's advice to his friend a few years ago: "Art thou not content to lay John Wesley upon his back, but thou wilt tread his guts out?"

- (5.) In writing, do not consider yourself as a man of fortune, or take any liberty with others on that account. These distinctions weigh little more in the literary world, than in the world of spirits. Men of sense simply consider what is written; not whether the writer be a Lord or a cobbler.

Lastly. Remember, "for every idle word men shall speak, they shall give an account in the day of judgment!" Remember, "by thy words shalt thou be justified; or by thy words shalt thou be condemned!"

BRISTOL, March 14, 1773.

AN ANSWER

TO

MR. ROWLAND HILL'S TRACT, ENTITLED, "IMPOSTURE DETECTED."

Jealousy, cruel as the grave! — Canticles 8:6.
Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, durst not bring a railing
accusation against him. — Jude 9.

IN a tract just published by Mr. Rowland Hill, there are several assertions which are not true; and the whole pamphlet is wrote in an unchristian and ungentlemanlike manner. I shall first set down the assertions in order, and then proceed to the manner.

I.

1. "Throughout the whole of Paul's Epistles, he can scarcely write a single line without mentioning Christ." (Page 3.) I just opened on the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In the last thirty verses of this chapter, how often does he mention Christ? In every single line?

2. "In that wretched harangue, which he calls a sermon, he makes himself the only subject of his own panegyrics." (Page 4.)

Being aware of this charge, I have said, "I am, in one respect, an improper person to give this information; as it will oblige me frequently to speak of myself, which may have the appearance of ostentation. But, with regard to this, I can only cast myself upon the candor of my hearers; being persuaded they will put the most favorable construction upon what is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. For there is no other person, if I

decline the task, who can supply my place, who has a perfect knowledge of the work in question, from the beginning of it to this day.” (*Sermons*, Vol. VII. p. 420.)

I give an account of the rise of this work at Oxford, from 1725 to 1735, pages at 421, 422; at London and elsewhere, pages 422, 423. In all this there is not a line of panegyric upon myself, but a naked recital of facts. Nor is there any panegyric on any one in the following pages, but a plain account of the Methodist doctrines.

It may be observed, (if it is worth observing,) that I preached in the open air in October, 1735. Mr. Whitefield was not then ordained.

3. “Not a single line tending to vindicate, or illustrate, any one fundamental doctrine of the gospel appear throughout the whole.” (*Imposture Detected*, p. 4.) Yes: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,” is one fundamental doctrine of the gospel: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” is another. And both these are vindicated and illustrated for several pages together.

4. “His sacrilegious hand violates the ashes of the dead, traduces the character of Mr. Whitefield, insinuates that he was the first who preached in the open air; with the greatest bitterness of speech, traduces the dead, as a Dissenter from the Church.” (Page 16.)

My words are: “A good man, who met with us at Oxford, while he was absent from us, conversed much with Dissenters, and contracted a strong prejudice against the Church; and not long after he totally separated from us;” (*Ibid.*, page 429;) from my brother and me. This is every word I say about Mr. Whitefield. And is this “violating the ashes of the dead?” Is this “traducing his character?” Certainly not traducing him as “a Dissenter from the Church,” much less “with the greatest bitterness of speech.” Where is the bitterness? And this is the whole ground for pouring out such a flood of abuse, obloquy, and calumny! But Mr. Hill goes on: “With ungodly craft he claws up the ashes of the dead. He says Mr. Whitefield, by conversing with the Dissenters,” (I mean chiefly the Presbyterians in New England,) “contracted a strong prejudice against the Church.”

(*Imposture Detected*, p. 18.) I say so still. And how will Mr. Hill disprove it? Why, “be manifested his strong attachment to the Church, by erecting Tottenham-Court chapel, for the celebration of the Church Service; yea, and reading the Liturgy himself.” Nay, if this proved *his* strong attachment to the Church, it will equally prove *mine*; for I have read the Liturgy as often as he; and I am now erecting a chapel (*hinc illae lachrymae!*)⁵⁷ for the celebration of the Church Service.

5. “He cast lots for his creed.” (Page 8.) Never in my life. That paltry story is untrue. They who tell it cast no honor upon him who published a private letter, wrote in confidence of friendship.

6. “He gives up the righteousness of Christ.” (Page 9.) No more than I give up his Godhead. But I renounce both the phrase and thing, as it is explained by Antinomian writers.

7. “He gives up the atonement of Christ. The atonement and the righteousness of Christ he considers as mere words.” (Page 10.) Nothing can be more false. It is not concerning these I advise,

*Projicere ampullas, et sesquipedalia verba.*⁵⁸

“But a man cannot fear God, and work righteousness evangelically, without living faith.” Most certainly. And who denies this? I have proved it an hundred times.

8. “He renounced the grand Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone, in those horrid Minutes.” I never renounced it yet, and I trust never shall. The “horrid Minutes” Mr. Fletcher has so effectually vindicated, that I wonder Mr. Hill should mention them any more.

9. “After all possible candor and forbearance had been shown to him,” (By whom? by Mr. Toplady, Mr. Richard Hill, or Mr. Rowland, who has excelled them all?) “this interloper” (a pretty word, but what does it mean) “has totally renounced the gospel of Christ.” (Page 11.) Totally false; unless by the gospel be meant Antinomian Calvinism.

10. “In his last year’s Minutes, he speaks of the doctrines of grace” (Calvinism) “with as much venom as ever.” Just as much. Let the reader judge. The words occur page 11: —

“Q. 26. Calvinism has been the greatest hindrance of the work of God. What makes men swallow it so greedily?

“A. Because it is so pleasing to flesh and blood; the doctrine of final perseverance in particular.

“Q. 27. What can be done to stop its progress?

“A. (1.) Let all our Preachers carefully read our tracts, and Mr. Fletcher’s and Sellon’s.

“(2.) Let them preach universal redemption frequently and explicitly; but in love and gentleness; talking care never to return railing for railing. Let the Calvinists have all this on their side.”

Ecce signum! ⁵⁹

11. “He is most marvelously curious in forbidding his Preachers to say, My Lady.”

Were ever words so distorted and misrepresented! The words in the Minutes are: —

“Do not imitate them (the Calvinists of Trevecka in particular) in screaming, allegorizing, calling themselves ordained, boasting themselves of their learning, the College, or My lady.” (Page 12.)

Is this “forbidding them to say, My Lady?” No more than forbidding them to make a bow.

12. “A vast number of sluts had taken possession of the preaching-houses,” (No; the preaching-houses were not in question,) “and

female servants, by courtesy called maids,” (civil and kind! But neither were servants in question,) “are filthy slovens in their persons, dress, and maneuvers.” (See, Mr. Hill understands French!) “So Mr. John gives the public to understand.” (No, not Mr. John, but Mr. Hill. He goes on:) “And how is this mighty grievance to be redressed? ‘Why,’ says this Solomon in a cassock,” (Is not that witty?) “‘sluts are to be kept out, by not letting them in.’” (*Imposture Detected*, p. 12.) And is all this wit bestowed upon three poor lines? The words are just these: —

“Q. Complaint is made that sluts spoil our houses. How then can we prevent this?

“A. Let no known slut live in any of them.” (*Minutes*.)

What a color does Mr. Hill put upon this! But, meantime, where is conscience? Where is honor?

13. “He denies the doctrines of the Church of England;” (page 13;) that is, absolute predestination. Mr. Sellon has abundantly proved, that this is no doctrine of the Church of England. When Mr. Hill has answered his arguments, I will give him some more. The objections against lay Preachers (which come ill from Mr. Hill) I have largely answered in the “Third Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.” But I know not that any lay Preachers in connection with me, either baptize children, or administer the Lord’s supper. I never entreated anything of Bishop Erasmus, who had abundant unexceptionable credentials as to his Episcopal character. Nor did he “ever reject any overture” made by me. (Page 14.) Herein Mr. Hill has been misinformed. I deny the fact; let him produce his evidence. The perfection I hold is so far from being contrary to the doctrine of our Church, that it is exactly the same which every Clergyman prays for every Sunday: “Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name.” I mean neither more nor less than this. In doctrine, therefore, I do not dissent from the Church of England.

14. However, “he renounces the discipline of the Church.” (Page 15.) This objection too I have answered at large, in my Letters to Dr. Church,

another kind of opponent than Mr. Rowland Hill; a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian; and as such he both spoke and wrote.

15. "He falsely says, Almost all who were educated at Trevecka, except those that were ordained, and some of them too, disclaimed the Church, nay, and spoke of it upon all occasions with exquisite bitterness and contempt." This is a terrible truth. If Lady Huntingdon requires it, I can procure affidavits, both concerning the time and place.

16. "He professes he stands in no need of Christ's righteousness." (Page 23.) I never professed any such thing. The very sermon referred to, the fifth in the first volume, proves the contrary. But I flatly deny that sense of imputed righteousness which Mr. Hill contends for.

17. "He expressly maintains the merit of good works, in order to justification." (Page 24.) Neither expressly nor implicitly. I hope Mr. Hill has not read Mr. Fletcher's Checks, nor my sermons on the subject. If he has not, he has a poor excuse for this assertion: If he has, he can have no excuse at all.

18. "He contradicts himself concerning Enoch and Elijah. See his Notes, the former edition." (Page 28.) Wisely directed! for Mr. Hill knew the mistake was corrected in the next edition.

19. "He is ever raising malicious accusations against the lives and doctrines of all Calvinists, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, throughout all the kingdom." (Page 29.)

Thousands of Calvinists know the contrary, both Churchmen and Dissenters.

20. "He exerts all his art to irritate the civil powers against all the people of God." (Page 30.) "He says, the Dissenters revile and lightly esteem the sacred person of the King." I answer,

(1.) Are the Dissenters, are the Calvinists, "all the people of God?"

(2.) If you think they are, do all these defend the American rebels?

Who affirms it? I hope not a quarter, not a tenth part, of them.

(3.) Do I say, all the Dissenters revile the King? I neither say so, nor think so. Those that do, are guilty of what you impute to me. They “irritate the civil powers” against themselves.

21. “He says he will no more continue in fellowship with Calvinists than with thieves, drunkards, or common swearers.” No; I say I will have no fellowship with those who rail at their governors, (be they Calvinists or Arminians,) who speak all manner of evil of them in private, if not in public too. “Such is the character he gives of the Calvinistic Methodists.” (Page 31.) I do not; no more than of the Arminians. But I know there have been such among them: If they are wiser now, I am glad. In the mean time let him wear the cap whom it fits, be it Mr. Wilkes or Mr. Hill himself.

22. “This apostate miscreant” (civil!) “invites the King and his ministers to fall upon” — whom? those who “rail at their governors, who speak all manner of evil of them, in private, if not in public too.” I am glad they cry out, though before they are hurt; and I hope they will cease to speak evil of dignities, before those who bear not the sword in vain fall upon them, not for their opinion, but their evil practices.

23. “He says, Calvinists and all Dissenters are rebels.” (Page 32.) I never said or thought so. “But a few years ago, he himself thought the Americans were in the right.” I did; for then I thought that they sought nothing but legal liberty: But as soon as I was convinced they sought independency, I knew they were in the wrong. Mr. Evans’s low and scurrilous tracts have been confuted over and over.

24. “He trumpets himself forth as the greatest man that has ever lived since Constantine the Great.” (Page 37.) This too is in italics; it might have been in capitals; But it is an utter falsehood. Mr. Hill might as well have said, “He trumpets himself forth as the King of Great Britain.” The passage to which I suppose he alludes, and the only one he can allude to, is this: “When has true religion, since the time of Constantine the Great, made so large a progress within so small a space?” (*Sermons*, Vol. VII., p. 425.) Is this “trumpeting myself forth as the greatest man that has ever lived since” then?

25. "All his disciples are commanded not to read what is worse against Him." (*Imposture Detected*, page 38.) No; it is the Tabernacle disciples are commanded not to read Mr. Fletcher. And reason good; for there is no resisting the force of his arguments. Thousands, if they read them with any candor, would see that "God willeth all men to be saved."

26. Mr. Hill concludes: "I should have been glad to have addressed him in the softest and most tender style. But those are weapons he turns to ridicule." (Page 39.) When? Shows me a single instance. Indeed I never was tried. What Calvinist ever addressed me in a soft and tender style? And which of them did I turn to ridicule? I am utterly guiltless in this matter.

II.

1. I have now done with the merits of the cause, having refueled the charge in every article. And as to the manner, let any man of candor judge, whether I have not spoken the truth in love. I proceed now to take some notice of the manner wherein Mr. Hill speaks: To illustrate which, I need only present a few of his flowers to the impartial reader.

2. "All the divinity we find in this wretched harangue which he calls a sermon, are a few bungling scraps of the religion of nature, namely, love to God and love to man, which an Heathen might have preached as well as Mr. John;" (polite!) "and probably in a much better manner. Phrase half a dozen lines, and I defy anyone to discover whether the lying apostle of the Foundery be a Jew, a Papist, a Pagan, or a Turk." (Page 4.)

"Else I should have treated his trumpery with the silence and contempt it deserves. But to see Mr. Whitefield scratched out of his grave by the claws of this *designing wolf*," (there is a metaphor for you!) "is enough to make the very stones cry out, or (which would be a greater miracle still) redden even a Wesley's forehead with a blush." (Page 5.) I think it would be a greater miracle still to make a wolf blush.

"The dictatorial Mr. John lyingly maintains argument enough for the gaping dupes whom he leads by the nose." (Page 6.)

“He and his lay lubbers go forth to poison the minds of men.” (Page 11.)
Are not then the lay lubbers and the gaping dupes just fit for each other?

But who are these lay lubbers? They are “Wesley’s ragged legion of preaching tinkers, scavengers, draymen, and chimney-sweepers.” (Page 21)

3. “No man would do this, unless he were as unprincipled as a rook, and as silly as a jackdaw.”

“His own people say, ‘He is a very poor preacher;’ and that most of his laymen, raw and ignorant as they are, preach much more to the purpose. Indeed, the old gentleman has lost his teeth. But should he not then cease mumbling with his gums?” (Page 25.)

“Why do they not keep the shatter-brained old gentleman locked up in a garret?” (Page 36.)

4. “I doubt not but for profit’ sake he would profess himself a stanch Calvinist.” (Page 16.)

“The Rev. Mr. John, Mr. Whitefield’s *quondam* understrapper.” (*Ibid.*)
How sadly then did he mistake, when he so often subscribed himself,
“Your dutiful, your obliged and affectionate, son!”

“Mark the venom that now distils from his graceless pen.” “The venomous quill of this gray-headed enemy to all righteousness.” (Pages 17, 19.)

5. “The wretch thought himself safe, but; the crafty slanderer is taken in his own net.” (Page 20.)

“This truly Socinian, truly heathen, truly infernal, passage is found in that heretic’s sermon.” (Page 23.)

“The most rancorous pretenses that ever actuated the prostituted pen of a venal profligate.” (Page 30.)

“With him devils and Dissenters are terms synonymous. If so, what a devil must he be!” (*Ibid.*)

“The sole merit of the disappointed Orlando Furioso” (how pretty and quaint that is!) “is, seeking to enkindle a flame of ecclesiastical and civil discord.” (No; to put it out; which, I bless God, is done already, to a great degree:) “And his sole perfection consists in perfect hatred of all goodness and all good men.” (Page 31.)

Now, let all the world judge between Mr. Hill and me. I do not say all the religious world; but all that have the smallest portion of common sense and common humanity. Setting everything else aside, suppose him to be my superior in rank, fortune, learning, and understanding: Is this treatment for a young man to give to an old one, who, at least, is no fool, and who, before Mr. Hill was born, was in a more honorable employ than he is ever likely to be? What can inspire this young hero with such a spirit, and fill his mouth with such language? Is it any credit to his person, or to his cause? What can men think either of one or the other? If he does not reverence me, or common decency, should he not reverence himself? Why should he place himself on a level with “the ragged legion of tinkers, scavengers, draymen, chimney-sweepers?” Nay, there are many of these who would be ashamed to let such language come out of their mouth. If he writes any more, let him resume the scholar, the gentleman, and the Christian. Let him remember him who “left us an example, that we might tread in his steps: In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, peradventure God may bring them to the knowledge of the truth.”

LONDON, *June* 28, 1777.

THOUGHTS

CONCERNING GOSPEL MINISTERS.

1. How frequently do we hear this expression from the mouths of rich and poor, learned and unlearned! Many lament that they have not a Gospel Minister in their church, and therefore are constrained to seek one at the meeting. Many rejoice that they have a Gospel Minister, and that there are many such in their neighborhood. Meantime, they generally speak with much displeasure, if not contempt, of those who they say are not Gospel Ministers.

2. But it is to be feared, few of these understand what they say. Few understand what that expression means. Most that use it have only crude, confused notions concerning Gospel Ministers. And hence many inconveniences arise; yea, much hurt to the souls of men. They contract prejudices in favor of very worthless men, who are indeed blind leaders of the blind; not knowing what the real gospel is, and therefore incapable of preaching it to others. Meantime, from the same cause, they contract prejudices against other Ministers, who, in reality, both live and preach the gospel; and therefore are well able to instruct them in all those truths that accompany salvation.

3. But what then is the meaning of the expression? Who is a Gospel Minister? Let us consider this important question calmly, in the fear and in the presence of God.

Not everyone that preaches the eternal decrees; (although many suppose this is the very thing;) that talks much of the sovereignty of God, of free, distinguishing grace, of dear electing love, of irresistible grace, and of the infallible perseverance of the saints. A man may speak of all these by the

hour together; yea, with all his heart, and with all his voice; and yet have no right at all to the title of a Gospel Minister.

Not everyone that talks largely and earnestly on those precious subjects, — the righteousness and blood of Christ. Let a man descant upon these in ever so lively a manner, let him describe his sufferings ever so pathetically, if he stops there, if he does not show man's duty, as well as Christ's sufferings; if he does not apply all to the consciences of the hearers; he will never lead them to life, either here or hereafter; and therefore is no Gospel Minister.

Not everyone who deals in the promises only, without ever showing the terrors of the law; that slides over "the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness," and endeavors to heal those that never were wounded. These promise-mongers are no Gospel Ministers.

Not everyone (very nearly allied to the former) who bends all his strength to coax sinners to Christ. Such soft, tender expressions, as "My dear hearers, My dear lambs," though repeated a thousand times, do not prove a Gospel Minister.

Lastly. Not everyone that preaches Justification by faith; he that goes no farther than this, that does not insist upon sanctification also, upon all the fruits of faith, upon universal holiness, does not declare the whole counsel of God, and consequently is not a Gospel Minister.

4. Who then is such? Who is a Gospel Minister, in the full, scriptural sense of the word? He, and he alone, of whatever denomination, that does declare the whole counsel of God; that does preach the whole gospel, even justification and sanctification, preparatory to glory. He that does not put asunder what God has joined, but publishes alike, "Christ dying for us, and Christ living in us." He that constantly applies all this to the hearts of the hearers, being willing to spend and be spent for them; having himself the mind which was in Christ, and steadily walking, as Christ also walked; he, and he alone, can with propriety be termed a Gospel Minister.

5. Let it be particularly observed, if the gospel be “glad tidings of great salvation which shall be unto all people,” then those only are, in the full sense, Gospel Ministers who proclaim the “great salvation;” that is, salvation from all (both inward and outward) sin, into “all the mind that was in Christ Jesus;” and likewise proclaim offers of this salvation to every child of man. This honorable title is therefore vilely prostituted, when it is given to any but those who testify “that God willeth all men to be saved,” and “to be perfect as their Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

THOUGHTS UPON NECESSITY.

TO THE READER.

I had finished what I designed to say on this subject, when the “Essay on Liberty and Necessity” fell into my hands: A most elaborate piece, touched and retouched with all possible care. This has occasioned a considerable enlargement of the following tract. I would fain place mankind in a fairer point of view than that writer has done; as I cannot believe the noblest creature in the visible world to be only a fine piece of clock-work.

Is man a free agent, or is he not? Are his actions free or necessary? Is he self-determined in acting; or is he determined by some other being? Is the principle which determines him to act, in himself or in another? This is the question which I want to consider. And is it not an important one? Surely there is not one of greater importance in the whole nature of things. For what is there that more nearly concerns all that are born of women? What can be conceived which more deeply affects, not some only, but every child of man?

I.

1. That man is not self-determined; that the principle of action is lodged, not in himself, but in some other being; has been an exceeding ancient opinion, yea, near as old as the foundation of the world. It seems, none that admit of Revelation can have any doubt of this. For it was unquestionably the sentiment of Adam soon after he had eaten of the forbidden fruit. He imputes what he had done, not to himself, but another, “The woman whom thou gavest me.” It was also the sentiment of Eve, “The Serpent, he beguiled me, and I did eat.” “It is true, I did eat; but the cause of my eating, the spring of my action, was in another.”

2. The same opinion, that man is not self-determined, took root very early, and spread wide, particularly in the eastern world, many ages before Manes was born. Afterwards indeed, he, and his followers, commonly called Manichees, formed it into a regular system. They not only maintained, that all the actions of man were necessarily determined by a power exterior to himself, but likewise accounted for it, by ascribing the good to Oromasdes, the parent of all good; the evil to the other independent being, Arimanius, the parent of all evil.

3. From the eastern world, “when arts and empire learned to travel west,” this opinion traveled with them into Europe, and soon found its way into Greece. Here it was earnestly espoused and vehemently maintained by the Stoic philosophers; men of great renown among persons of literature, and some of the ablest disputants in the world. These affirmed with one mouth, that from the beginning of the world, if not rather from all eternity, there was an indissoluble chain of causes and effects, which included all human actions; and that these were by fate so connected together, that not one link of the chain could be broken.

4. A fine writer of our own country, who was a few years since gathered to his fathers, has with admirable skill drawn the same conclusion from different premises. He lays it down as a principle, (and a principle it is, which cannot reasonably be denied,) that as long as the soul is vitally united to the body, all its operations depend on the body; that; in particular all our thoughts depend upon the vibrations of the fibers of the brain; and of consequence vary, more or less, as those vibrations vary. In that expression, “our thoughts,” he comprises all our sensations, all our reflections and passions; yea, and all our volitions, and consequently our actions, which, he supposes, unavoidably follow those vibrations. He premises, “But you will say, This scheme infers the universal necessity of human actions;” and frankly adds, “Certainly it does. I am sorry for it; but I cannot help it.”

5. And this is the scheme which is now adopted by not a few of the most sensible men in our nation. One of these fairly confessing, that “he did not think himself a sinner,” was asked, “Do you never feel any wrong tempers? And do; you never speak or act in such a manner as your own

reason condemns?" He candidly answered, "Indeed I do. I frequently feel tempers, and speak many words, and do many actions, which I do not approve of. But I cannot avoid it. They result, whether I will or no, from the vibrations of my brain, together with the motion of my blood, and the flow of my animal spirits. But these are not in my own power. I cannot help them. They are independent on my choice. And therefore I cannot apprehend myself to be a sinner on this account."

6. Very lately another gentleman, in free conversation, was carrying this matter a little farther. Being asked, "Do you believe God is almighty?" he answered, "I do; or he could not have made the world." "Do you believe he is wise?" "I cannot tell. Much may be said on both sides." "Do you believe he is good?" "No; I cannot believe it. I believe just the contrary. For all the evil in the world is owing to Him. I can ascribe it to no other cause. I cannot blame that cur for barking or biting; it is his nature; and he did not make himself. I feel wrong tempers in myself; but that is not my fault; for I cannot help it. It is my nature; and I could not prevent my having this nature, neither can I change it."

7. The Assembly of Divines, who met at Westminster in the last century, express very nearly the same sentiment, though placed in a different light. They speak to this effect: "Whatever happens in time, was unchangeably determined from all eternity. God ordained or ever the world was made, all the things that should come to pass therein. The greatest and the smallest events were equally predetermined; in particular, all the thoughts, all the words, all the actions of every child of man; all that every man thinks, or speaks, or does, from his birth, till his spirit returns to God that gave it. It follows, that no man can do either more or less good, or more or less evil, than he does. None can think, speak, or act any otherwise than he does, not in any the smallest circumstance. In all he is bound by an invisible, but more than adamantine, chain. No man can move his head or foot, open or shut his eyes, lift his hand, or stir a finger, any otherwise than as God determined he should, from all eternity."

8. That this chain is invisible, they allow; man himself perceives nothing of it. He suspects nothing less; he imagines himself to be free in all his actions; he seems to move hither and thither, to go this way or that, to

choose doing evil or doing good, just at his own discretion. But all this is an entire mistake; it is no more than a pleasing dream: For all his ways are fixed as the pillars of heaven; all unalterably determined. So that, notwithstanding these gay, flattering appearances,

In spite of all the labor we create,
We only row; but we are steer'd by fate!

9 A late writer, in his celebrated book upon free will explains the matter thus: "The soul is now connected with a material vehicle, and placed in the material world. Various objects here continually strike upon one or other of the bodily organs. These communicate the impression to the brain; consequent on which such and such sensations follow. These are the materials on which the understanding works, in forming all its simple and complex ideas; according to which our judgments are formed. And according to our judgments are our passions; pure love and hate, joy and sorrow, desire and fear, with their innumerable combinations. Now, all these passions together are the will, variously modified; and all actions flowing from the will are voluntary actions; consequently, they are good or evil, which otherwise they could not be. And yet it is not in man to direct his own way, while he is in the body, and in the world."

10. The author of an "Essay on Liberty and Necessity," published some years since at Edinburgh, speaks still more explicitly, and endeavors to trace the matter to the foundation: "The impressions," says he, "which man receives in the natural world, do not correspond to the truth of things. Thus the qualities called secondary, which we by natural instinct attribute to matter, belong not to matter, nor exist without us; but all the beauty of colors with which heaven and earth appear clothed, is a sort of romance or illusion. For in external objects there is really no other distinction, but that of the size and arrangement of their constituent parts, whereby the rays of light are variously reflected and refracted." (Page 152, etc.)

"In the moral world, whatever is a cause with regard to its proper effect, is an effect with regard to some prior cause, and so backward without end. Events, therefore, being a train of causes and effects, are necessary and

filed. Everyone must be, and cannot be otherwise than it is.” (Page 157, etc.)

“And yet a feeling of an opposite kind is deeply rooted in our nature. Many things appear to us, as not predetermined by any invariable law. We naturally make a distinction, between things that must be, and things that may be, or may not.

So with regard to the actions of men. We see that connection between an action and its motive to be so strong, that we reason with full confidence concerning the future actions of others. But if actions necessarily arise from their proper motives, then all human actions are necessary and fixed. Yet they do not appear so to us. Indeed, before any particular action, we always judge, that the action will be the necessary result of some motive. But afterwards the feeling instantly varies. We accuse and condemn a man for doing what is wrong. We conceive, he had a power of acting otherwise; and the whole train of our feelings suppose him to have been entirely a free agent.

“But what does this liberty amount to? In all cases, our choice is determined by some motive. It must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole. But motives are not under our power or direction. When two motives offer, we have not the power of choosing as we please. We are necessarily determined.

“Man is passive in receiving impressions of things; according to which the judgment is necessarily formed. This the will necessarily obeys, and the outward action necessarily follows the will.

“Hence it appears, that God decrees all future events. He who gave such a nature to his creatures, and placed them in such circumstances, that a certain train of actions must necessarily follow; he who did so, and who must have foreseen the consequences, did certainly decree, that those events should fall out, and that men should act just as they do.

“The Deity is the First Cause of all things. He formed the plan on which all things were to be governed, and put it in execution by establishing, both

in the natural and moral world, certain laws that are fixed and immutable. By virtue of these, all things proceed in a regular train of causes and effects, bringing about the events contained in the original plan, and admitting the possibility of no other. This universe is a vast machine, wound up and set a-going. The several springs and wheels act unerringly one upon another. The hand advances and the clock strikes, precisely as the Artist has determined. In this plan, man, a rational creature, was to fulfill certain ends. He was to appear as an actor, and to act with consciousness and spontaneity. Consequently, it was necessary he should have some idea of liberty, some feeling of things possible and contingent, things depending on himself, that he might be led to exercise that activity for which he was designed. To have seen himself a part of that great machine would have been altogether incongruous to the ends he was to fulfil. Had he seen that nothing was contingent, there would have been no room for forethought, nor for any sort of industry or care. Reason could not have been exercised in the way it is now; that is, man could not have been man. But now, the moment he comes into the world, he acts as a free agent. And contingency, though it has no real existence in things, is made to appear as really existing. Thus is our natural feeling directly opposite to truth and matter of fact; seeing it is certainly impossible, that any man should act any otherwise than he does."

See necessity drawn at full length, and painted in the most lively colors!

II.

1. It is easy to observe, that every one of these schemes implies the universal necessity of human actions. In this they all agree, that man is not a free but a necessary agent, being absolutely determined in all his actions by a principle exterior to himself. But they do not agree what that principle is. The most ancient of them, the Manichæan, maintained, that men are determined to evil by the evil God, Arimanius; that Oromasdes, the good God, would have prevented or removed that evil, but could not; the power of the evil God being so great, that he is not able to control it.

2. The Stoics, on the other hand, did not impute the evil that is in the world to any intelligent principle, but either to the original stubbornness of matter, which even divine power was not capable of removing; to the

concatenation of causes and effects, which no power whatever could alter; or to unconquerable fate, to which they supposed all the gods, the Supreme not excepted, to be subject.

3. The author of two volumes, entitled “Man,” rationally rejects all the preceding schemes, while he deduces all human actions from those passions and judgments which, during the present union of the soul and body, necessarily result from such and such vibrations of the fibers of the brain. Herein he indirectly ascribes the necessity of all human actions to God; who, having fixed the laws of this vital union according to his own good pleasure, having so constituted man that the motions of the soul thus depend on the fibers of the body, has thereby laid him under an invincible necessity of acting thus, and in no other manner. You do those likewise, who suppose all the judgments and passions necessarily to flow from the motion of the blood and spirits. For this is indirectly to impute all our passions and actions to Him who alone determined the manner wherein our blood and spirits should move.

4. The gentleman next mentioned does this directly, without any softening or circumlocution at all. He flatly and roundly affirms, The Creator is the proper Author of everything which man does; that by creating him thus, he has absolutely determined the manner wherein he shall act; and that therefore man can no more help sinning, than a stone can help falling. The Assembly of Divines do as directly ascribe the necessity of human actions to God, in affirming that God has eternally determined whatsoever shall be done in time. So likewise does Mr. Edwards of New England; in proving by abundance of deep, metaphysical reasoning, that “we *must* see, hear, taste, feel the objects that surround us, and *must* have such judgments, passions, actions, and no other.” He flatly ascribes the necessity of all our actions to Him who united our souls to these bodies, placed us in the midst of these objects, and ordered that these sensations, judgments, passions, and actions should spring therefrom.

5. The author last cited connects together and confirms all the preceding schemes; particularly those of the ancient Stoics and the modern Calvinists.

III.

1. It is not easy for a man of common understanding, especially if unassisted by education, to unravel these finely woven schemes, or show distinctly where the fallacy lies. But he knows, he feels, he is certain, they cannot be true; that the holy God cannot be the author of sin. The horrid consequences of supposing this may appear to the meanest understanding, from a few plain, obvious considerations, of which every man that has common sense may judge.

If all the passions, the tempers, the actions of men, are wholly independent on their own choice, are governed by a principle exterior to themselves, then there can be no moral good or evil; there can be neither virtue nor vice, neither good nor bad actions, neither good nor bad passions or tempers. The sun does much good; but it is no virtue; but he is not capable of moral goodness. Why is he not? For this plain reason, because he does not act from choice. The sea does much harm: It swallows up thousands of men; but it is not capable of moral badness, because it does not act by choice, but from a necessity of nature. If indeed one or the other can be said to act at all. Properly speaking it does not: It is purely passive: It is only acted upon by the Creator; and must move in this manner and no other, seeing it cannot resist His will. In like manner, St. Paul did much good: But it was no virtue, if he did not act from choice. And if he was in all things necessitated to think and act, he was not capable of moral goodness. Nero does much evil; murders thousands of men, and sets fire to the city: But it is no fault; he is not capable of moral badness, if he does not act from choice, but necessity. Nay, properly, the man does not act at all: He is only acted upon by the Creator, and must move thus, being irresistibly impelled. For who can resist his will?

2. Again: If all the actions, and passions, and tempers of men are quite independent on their own choice, are governed by a principle exterior to themselves; then none of them is either rewardable or punishable, is either praise or blameworthy. The consequence is undeniable: I cannot praise the sun for waning, nor blame the stone for wounding me; because neither the sun nor the stone acts from choice, but from necessity. Therefore, neither does the latter deserve blame, nor the former deserve praise. Neither is the one capable of reward, nor the other of punishment. And if a man does

good as necessarily as the sun, he is no more praiseworthy than that; if he does evil as necessarily as the stone, he is no more blameworthy. The dying to save your country is no way rewardable, if you are compelled thereto; and the betraying your country is no way punishable, if you are necessitated to do it.

3. It follows, if there be no such thing as virtue or vice, as moral good or evil, if there be nothing rewardable or punishable in the actions or passions of men, then there can be no judgment to come, and no future rewards and punishments. For might not God as well judge the trees of the wood, or the stones of the field, as man, if man was as totally passive as they? as irresistibly determined to act thus or thus? What should he be commended or rewarded for, who never did any good but when he could not help it, being impelled thereto by a force which he could not withstand? What should he be blamed or punished for, who never did any evil, to which he was not determined by a power he could no more resist, than he could shake the pillars of heaven?

This objection the author of the Essay gives in its full strength: "The advocates for liberty reason thus: If actions be necessary, and not in our own power, what ground is there for blame, self-condemnation, or remorse? If a clock were sensible of its own motions, and knew that they proceeded according to necessary laws, could it find fault with itself for striking wrong? Would it not blame the artist, who had so ill adjusted the wheels? So that, upon this scheme, all the moral constitution of our nature is overturned; there is an end to all the operations of conscience, about right and wrong; man is no longer a moral agent, nor the subject of praise or blame for what he does."

He strangely answers: "Certainly the pain, the remorse, which is felt by any man who had been guilty of a bad action, springs from the notion, that he has a power over his own actions, that he might have forbore to do it. It is on this account, that he is angry at himself, and confesses himself to be blamable. That uneasiness proceeds on the supposition, that he is free, and might have acted a better part. And one under the dominion of bad passions is condemned upon this ground, that it was in his power to be free from them. Were not this the case, brutes might be the objects of

moral blame as well as man. But we do not blame them, because they have not freedom, a power of directing their own actions. We must therefore admit, that the idea of freedom is essential to the moral feeling. On the system of universal necessity, there could be no place for blame or remorse. And we struggle in vain to reconcile to this system the testimony which conscience clearly gives to freedom.”

Is this an answer to the objection? Is it not fairly giving up the whole cause?

He adds: “A feeling of liberty, which I now scruple not to call deceitful, is interwoven with our nature. Man must be so constituted, in order to attain virtue.” *To attain virtue!* Nay, you have yourself allowed, that, on this supposition, virtue and vice can have no being. You go on: “If he saw himself as he really is,” (Sir, do not you see yourself so?) “if he conceived himself and all his actions necessarily linked into the great chain, which renders the whole order both of the natural and moral world unalterable determined in every article, what would follow?” Why, just nothing at all. The great chain must remain as it was before; since whatever you see or conceive, that it “unalterably determined in every article.”

To confute himself still more fully, he says, “If we knew good and evil to be necessary and unavoidable,” (contradiction in terms; but let it pass,) “there would be no more place for praise or blame; no indignation at those who had abused their rational powers; no sense of just punishment annexed to crimes, or of any reward deserved by good actions. All these feelings vanish at once, with the feeling of liberty. And the sense of duty must be quite extinguished: For we cannot conceive any moral obligation, without supposing, a power in the agent over his own actions.”

If so, what is he who publishes a book to show mankind that they have no power over their own actions?

To the objection, that this scheme “makes God the author of sin,” the Essayist feebly answers: “Sin, or moral turpitude, lies in the evil intention of him that commits it, or in some wrong affection. Now, there is no wrong intention in God.” What then? Whatever wrong intention or

affection is in man, you make God the direct author of it. For you flatly affirm, "Moral evil cannot exist, without being permitted of God. And with regard to a first cause, permitting, is the same thing as causing." That I totally deny: But if it be, God is the proper cause of all the sin in the universe.

4. Suppose, now, the Judge of all the earth, — having just pronounced the awful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," — should say to one on the left hand, "What canst thou offer in thy own behalf?" Might he not, on this scheme, answer, "Lord, why am I doomed to dwell with everlasting burnings? For not doing good? Was it ever in my power to do any good action? Could I ever do any, but by that grace which thou hadst determined not to give me? For doing evil? Lord, did I ever do any, which I was not bound to do by thy own decree? Was there ever a moment when it was in my power, either to do good, or to cease from evil? Didst not thou fix whatever I should do, or not do, or ever I came into the world? And was there ever one hour, from my cradle to my grave, wherein I could act otherwise than I did?" Now, let any man say whose mouth would be stopped, that of the criminal or the Judge.

5. But if, upon this supposition, there can be no judgment to come, and no future rewards or punishments it likewise follows, that the Scriptures, which assert both, cannot be of divine original. If there be not "a day wherein God will judge the world, by that Man whom he hath appointed;" if the wicked shall not go into eternal punishment, neither the righteous into life eternal; what can we think of that book which so frequently and solemnly affirms all these things? We can no longer maintain, that "all Scripture was given by inspiration of God," since it is impossible that the God of truth should be the author of palpable falsehoods. So that, whoever asserts the pre-determination of all human actions, a doctrine totally inconsistent with the scriptural doctrines of a future judgment, heaven and hell, strikes hereby at the very foundation of Scripture, which must necessarily stand or fall with them.

6. Such absurdities will naturally and necessarily follow from the scheme of necessity. But Mr. Edwards has found out a most ingenious way of

evading this consequence: "I grant," says that good and sensible man, "if the actions of men were involuntary, the consequence would inevitably follow, — they could not be either good or evil; nor, therefore, could they be the proper object either of reward or punishment. But here lies the very ground of your mistake; their actions are not involuntary. The actions of men are quite voluntary; the fruit of their own will. They love, they desire, evil things; therefore they commit them. But love and hate, desire and aversion, are only several modes of willing. Now, if men voluntarily commit theft, adultery, or murder, certainly the actions are evil, and therefore punishable. And if they voluntarily serve God, and help their neighbors, the actions are good, and therefore rewardable."

7. I cannot possibly allow the consequence, upon Mr. Edwards's supposition. Still I say, if they are necessitated to commit robbery or murder, they are not punishable for committing it. But you answer, "Nay, their actions are voluntary, the fruit of their own will." If they are, yet that is not enough to make them either good or evil. For their will, on your suppositions is irresistibly impelled; so that they cannot help willing thus or thus. If so, they are no more blamable for that will, than for the actions which follow it. There is no blame if they are under a necessity of willing. There can be no moral good or evil, unless they have liberty as well as will, which is entirely a different thing. And the not adverting to this seems to be the direct occasion of Mr. Edwards's whole mistake.

8. God created man an intelligent being; and endued him with will as well as understanding. Indeed, it seems, without this, his understanding would have been given to no purpose. Neither would either his will or understanding have answered any valuable purpose, if liberty had not been added to them, a power distinct from both; a power of choosing for himself, a self-determining principle. It may be doubted whether God ever made an intelligent creature without all these three faculties; whether any spirit ever existed without them; yea, whether they are not implied in the very nature of a spirit. Certain it is, that no being can be accountable for its actions, which has not liberty, as well as will and understanding.

How admirably is this painted by Milton, supposing God to speak concerning his new-made creature! —

"I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the' ethereal powers, —
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith and love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
 Not what they would? What praise could they receive,
 What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason, (reason also is choice,)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had served necessity,
 Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created —
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all
 Both what they judge and what they choose: For so
 I form'd them free; and free they must remain,
 Till they enthrall themselves. I else must change
 Their nature, and reverse the high decree,
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall."

Paradise Lost, Book III.

9. It seems, they who divide the faculties of the human soul into the understanding, will, and affections, unless they make the will and affections the same thing; (and then how inaccurate is the division!) must mean by affections, the will, properly speaking, and by the term *will*, neither more nor less than *liberty*; the power of choosing either to do or not to do, (commonly called liberty of contradiction,) or to do this or the contrary, good or evil (commonly called liberty of contrariety). Without the former at least, there can be nothing good or evil, rewardable or punishable. But it is plain, the doctrine of necessity, as taught either by ancient Heathens, or by the moderns, (whether Deists or Christians,) destroys both, leaves not a shadow of either, in any soul of man: Consequently, it destroys all the morality of human actions, making man a mere machine; and leaves no room for any judgment to come, or for either rewards or punishments.

IV.

1. But whatever be the consequences deducible from this, that all human actions are necessary, how will you answer the arguments which are brought in defense of this position? Let us try whether something of this kind may not be done in a few words.

Indeed, as to the first scheme, that of the Manichees, the maintainers of a good and an evil God, though it was formerly espoused by men of renown, St. Augustine in particular; yet it is now so utterly out of date, that it would be lost labor to confute it. A little more plausible is this scheme of the Stoics', building necessity upon fate, upon the insuperable stubbornness of matter, or the indissoluble chain of causes and effects. Perhaps they invented this scheme to exculpate God, to avoid laying the blame upon him, by allowing He would have done better if he could; that he was willing to cure the evil, but was not able. But we may answer them short, There is no fate above the Most High; that is an idle, irrational fiction. Neither is there anything in the nature of matter, which is not obedient to his word. The Almighty is able, in the twinkling of an eye, to reduce any matter into any form he pleases; or to speak it into nothing; in a moment to expunge it out of his creation.

2. The still more plausible scheme of Dr. Hartley, (and I might add, those of the two gentlemen above-mentioned, which nearly coincide with it,) now adopted by almost all who doubt of the Christian system, requires a more particular consideration, were it only because it has so many admirers. And it certainly contains a great deal of truth, as will appear to any that considers it calmly. For who can deny, that not only the memory, but all the operations of the soul, are now dependent on the bodily organs, the brain in particular? insomuch that a blow on the back part of the head (as frequent experience shows) may take away the understanding, and destroy at once both sensation and reflection; and no irregular flow of spirits may quickly turn the deepest philosopher into a madman. We must allow likewise, that while the very power of thinking depends so much upon the brain, our judgments must needs depend thereon, and in the same proportion. It must be farther allowed, that, as our sensations, our reflections, and our judgments, so our will and passions also, which naturally follow from our judgments, ultimately depend on the fibers of

the brain. But does all this infer the total necessity of all human actions? "I am sorry for it," says the Doctor; "but I cannot help it." I verily think I can. I think I cannot only cut the knot, by showing (as above) the intolerable absurdities which this scheme implies; but fairly untie it, by pointing out just where the fallacy lies.

3. But first permit me to say a word to the author of the Essay. His grand reason for supposing all mankind in a dream, is drawn from analogy: "We are in a continual delusion as to the natural world; why not as to the moral?" "Well; how does he prove, that we are in a continual delusion as to the natural world? Thus: "All the qualities which are termed secondary qualities, we by a natural instinct ascribe to matter. But it is a mere deceit. They do not belong to matter, neither exist without us."

As commonly as this is asserted, it is absolutely false, as will appear quickly.

You instance in colors, and confidently say, "All this beauty of colors, with which heaven and earth appear to be clothed, is a sort of romance or illusion. In external objects there is no other distinction but that of the size and arrangement of their constituent parts, whereby the rays of light are variously reflected or refracted."

But are those rays of light real? And do they exist without us? Certainly, as much as the sun does. And are the constituent parts of those objects real? Nobody questions it. But are they really of such a size, and arranged in such a manner? They are; and what will you infer from that? I infer; that color is just as real as size or figure; and that all colors do as really exist without us, as trees, or corn, or heaven, or earth.

"But what do you mean by color?" When I say, "That cloth is of a red color," I mean its surface is so disposed as to reflect the red (that is, the largest) rays of light. When I say, "The sky is blue," I mean, it is so disposed as to reflect the blue (that is, the smallest) rays of light. And where is the delusion here? Does not that disposition, do not those rays, as really exist, as either the cloth or the sky? And are they not as really reflected, as the ball in a tennis court? It is true, that, when they strike

upon my eye, a particular sensation follows in my soul. But that sensation is not color; I know no one that calls it so. Color therefore is a real material thing. There is no illusion in the case, unless you confound the perception with the thing perceived. And all other secondary qualities are just as real as figure or any other primary one. So you have no illusion in the natural world to countenance that you imagine to be in the moral. Wherever, therefore, this argument occurs, (and it occurs ten times over,) — “The natural world is all illusion; therefore, so is the moral,” — it is just good for nothing.

But, take it all together, and what a supposition is this! Is it not enough to make one’s blood run cold? “The great God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, the God of truth, has encompassed with falsehood every soul that he has made! has given up all mankind ‘to a strong delusion,’ to believe a lie! yea, all his creation is a lie; all the natural and all the moral world! “If so, you make God himself, rather than the devil, (horrid thought!) “the father of lies!” Such you doubtless represent him, when you say, not only that he has surrounded us with illusion on every side; but that the feelings which he has interwoven with our inmost nature are equally illusive!

That all thence shadows, which for things we take,
Are but the empty dreams which in death’s sleep we make!

And yet, after this, you make a feint of disputing in defense of a material world! Inconsistency all over! What proof have we of this, what possible proof can we have, if we cannot trust our own eyes, or ears, or any or all of our senses? But it is certain I can trust none of my senses, if I am a mere machine. For I have the testimony of all my outward and all my inward senses, that I am a free agent. If therefore I cannot trust them in this, I can trust them in nothing. Do not tell me there are sun, moon, and stars, or that there are men, beasts, or birds, in the world. I cannot believe one tittle of it, if I cannot believe what I feel in myself, namely, that it depends on me, and no other being, whether I shall now open or shut my eyes, move my head hither and thither, Or stretch my hand or my foot. If I am necessitated to do all this, contrary to the whole both of my inward

and outward senses, I can believe nothing else, but must necessarily sink into universal skepticism.

Let us now weigh the main argument on which this author builds the melancholy hypothesis of necessity: "Actions necessarily arise from their several motives: Therefore, all human actions are necessary." Again: "In all cases the choice must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole. But motives are not under our power. Man is passive in receiving impressions of things, according to which the last judgment is necessarily formed. This the will necessarily obeys, and the outward action necessarily follows the will."

Let us take this boasted argument in pieces, and survey it part by part.

- (1.) "Motives are not under our power." This is not universally true: Some are, some are not. That man has a strong motive to run his neighbor through, namely, violent anger; and yet the action does not necessarily follow. Often it does not follow at all; and where it does, not necessarily: He might have resisted that motive.
- (2.) "In all cases the choice must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole." This is absolutely false. It is flatly contrary to the experience of all mankind. Who may not say on many occasions, *Video meliora?*⁶⁰ I know what I do, is not "best upon the whole?"
- (3.) "Man is passive in receiving the impressions of things." Not altogether. Even here much depends on his own choice. In many cases he may or may not receive the impression; in most he may vary it greatly.
- (4.) "According to these his last judgment is necessarily formed." Nay, this too depends much upon his choice. Sometimes his first, sometimes his last, judgment, is according to the impressions which he has received; and frequently it is not.
- (5.) "This the will necessarily obeys." Indeed it does not. The mind has an intrinsic power of cutting off the connection between the judgment and the will.
- (6.) "And the outward action necessarily follows the will." Not so. The thing I would, I do not; and the thing I would not, that I do.

Whatever then becomes of the chain of events, this chain of argument has not one good link belonging to it.

4. But allowing all he contends for, — that upon such vibrations of the brain, such sensations directly follow, and indirectly, as the various combinations and results of them, all our judgments and passions, and consequently words and actions; yet this infers no necessity at all, if there be a God in the world. Upon this the whole matter turns. And,

“This circumstance the Doctor had forgot.” And so indeed have almost the whole tribe of modern philosophers. They do not at all take God into their account; they can do their whole business without him. But in truth this their wisdom is their folly; for no system, either of morality or philosophy, can be complete, unless God be kept in view, from the very beginning to the end. Every true philosopher will surely go at least as far as the poor heathen poet: —

Εκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεθα, καὶ ἐν Διὶ λήγετε Μῶσαι.

“Muses, begin and end with God supreme!”

Now, if there be a God, he cannot but have all power over every creature that he has made. He must have equal power over matter and spirits, over our souls and bodies. What are then all the vibrations of the brain to him? or all the natural consequences of them? Suppose there be naturally the strongest concatenation of vibrations, sensations, reflections, judgments, passions, actions; cannot He, in a moment, whenever and however He pleases, destroy that concatenation? Cannot he cut off, or suspend, in any degree, the connection between vibrations and sensations, between sensations and reflections, between reflections and judgments, and between judgments and passions or actions? We cannot have any idea of God’s omnipotence, without seeing He can do this if he will.

5. “If he will,” you may say, “we know he can. But have we any reason to think he will?” Yes; the strongest reason in the world, supposing that God is love; more especially, suppose he “is loving to every man,” and that “his mercy is over all his works.” If so, it cannot be, that he should see the noblest of his creatures under heaven necessitated to evil, and incapable of

any relief but from himself, without affording that relief. It is undeniable, that he has fixed in man, in every man, his umpire, conscience; an inward judge, which passes sentence both on his passions and actions, either approving or condemning them. Indeed it has not power to remove what it condemns; it shows the evil which it cannot cure. But the God of power can cure it; and the God of love will, if we choose he should. But he will no more necessitate us to be happy, than he will permit anything beneath the sun to lay us under a necessity of being miserable. I am not careful therefore about the flowing of my blood and spirits, or the vibrations of my brain; being well assured, that, however my spirits may flow, or my nerves and fibres vibrate, the Almighty God of love can control them all, and will (unless I obstinately choose vice and misery) afford me such help, as, in spite of all these, will put it into my power to be virtuous and happy forever.

GLASGOW, May 14, 1774.

A THOUGHT ON NECESSITY.

I.

1. THE late ingenious Dr. Hartley, in his “Essay on Man,” resolves all thought into vibrations of the brain. When any of the fine fibers of the brain are moved, so as to vibrate to and fro, then (according to his scheme) a perception or sensation is the natural consequence. These sensations are at first simple, but are afterwards variously compounded; till, by farther vibrations, ideas of reflection are added to ideas of sensation. By the additional vibrations of this curious organ our judgments of things are also formed; and from the same fruitful source arise our reasonings in their endless variety.

2. From our apprehensions of things, from our judgments and reasonings concerning them, all our passions arise; whether those which are more sudden and transient, or those of a permanent nature. And from the several mixtures and modifications of these, our tempers or dispositions flow; very nearly, if not altogether, the same with what are usually termed virtues or vices.

3. Our passions and tempers are the immediate source of all our words and actions. Of consequence, these likewise depending on our passions, and our passions on our judgments and apprehensions, all our actions, passions, and judgments are ultimately resolvable into the vibrations of the brain. And all of them together follow each other in one connected chain.

4. “But you will say,” (says the Doctor,) “This infers the universal necessity of human actions. I am sorry for it; but I cannot help it.” But since he saw, this destroyed that very essence of morality, leaving no room for either virtue or vice, why did he publish it to the world? Why? Because his brain vibrated in such a manner, that he could not help it.

Alas for poor human nature! If this is so, where is “the dignity of man?”

II.

1. But other great men totally disapprove of the doctrine of vibration. They give an entirely different account of this whole affair. They say, the delicate, soft, and almost fluid substance, of which the brain is composed, is absolutely incapable of such vibrations as the Doctor ascribes to it; but that the animal spirits, whatever they are, continually moving through that soft substance, naturally form various traces therein; first, very simple, then less or more compounded; that these are afterward varied innumerable ways; and that from these simple or compounded traces arise simple or compounded ideas, whether of sensation or reflection. From these result the judgments we form, with all our train of reasonings; and, at a little farther remove, our passions, our tempers, and from these our words and actions.

2. It is easy to observe, that this scheme equally infers the universal necessity of human actions. The premises indeed are a little different, but the conclusion is one and the same. If every thought, word, and action necessarily depends upon those traces in the brain, which are formed whether we will or no, without either our consent or knowledge; then the man has no more liberty in thinking, speaking, or acting, than the stone has in falling.

III.

That great man, President Edwards, of New-England, places this in a still stronger light. He says, —

1. The whole frame of this world wherein we are placed is so constituted, that, without our choice, visible objects affect our eyes, sounds strike upon the ear, and the other things which surround us affect the other bodily organs, according to their several natures.

2. The nerves, which are spread all over the body, without any choice of ours, convey the impression made on the outward organ to the common

sensory; supposed to be lodged either in the pineal gland, or in some other part of the brain.

3. Immediately, without our choice, the perception or sensation follows:
And from this,

4. The simple apprehension, (analogous to sensation,) which furnishes us with simple ideas.

5. These ideas are more and more associated together, still without our choice; and we understand, judge, reason accordingly; yea, love, hate, joy, grieve, hope, or fear.

6. And according to our passions we speak and act. Where is liberty then? It is excluded. All you see, is one connected chain, fixed as the pillars of heaven.

IV.

To the same effect, though with a little variation, speaks the ingenious Lord Kames. He says, —

The universe is one immense machine, one amazing piece of clock-work, consisting of innumerable wheels fitly framed, and indissolubly linked together. Man is one of these wheels, fixed in the middle of this vast automaton. And he moves just as necessarily as the rest, as the sun or moon, or earth. Only with this difference, (which was necessary for completing the design of the great Artificer,) that he seems to himself perfectly free; he imagines that he is unnecessitated, and master of his own motion; whereas in truth he no more directs or moves himself, than any other wheel in the machine.

The general inference then is still the same; the point which all these so laboriously endeavor to prove is, that inevitable necessity governs all things, and men have no more liberty than stones.

V.

1. But allowing all this; allowing (in a sense) all that Dr. Hartley, Edwards, and their associates contend for; what discovery have they made? What new thing have they found out? What does all this amount to? With infinite pains, with immense parade, with the utmost ostentation of mathematical and metaphysical learning, they have discovered just as much as they might have found in one single line of the Bible.

“Without me ye can do nothing!” absolutely, positively nothing! seeing, in Him all things live and move, as well as have their being; seeing, he is not only the true *primum mobile*, containing the whole frame of creation, but likewise the inward, sustaining, acting principle, indeed the only proper agent in the universe; unless so far as he imparts a spark of his active, self-moving nature to created spirits. But more especially “ye can do nothing,” right, nothing wise, nothing good, without the direct, immediate agency of the First Cause.

2. Let the trial be made. And First, what can reason, all sufficient reason, do in this matter? Let us try, upon Dr. Hartley’s scheme. Can it prevent or alter the vibrations of the brain? Can it prevent or alter the various compositions of them? or cut off the connection between these, and our apprehensions, judgments, reasonings? or between these and our passions? or that between our passions, and our words and actions? Not at all. Reason can do nothing in this matter. In spite of all our reason, nature will keep its course, will hold on its way, and utterly bear down its feeble opponent.

3. And what can reason do, upon the second supposition? Can it prevent or alter the traces in the brain? Not a jot more than it could the vibrations. They laugh at all its power. Can it cut off the connection between those traces and our apprehensions; or that between our apprehensions and our passions; or between our passions and actions? Nothing at all of this. It may see the evil, but it cannot help it.

4. Try what reason can do, upon the third supposition, that; of President Edwards. Can it change the appearances of the things that surround us? or the impression which the nerves convey to the common sensory? or the

sensation that follows? or the apprehension? Or can it cut off the connection between our apprehensions of things and our passions? or that between our passions and our actions? Poor, impotent reason! It can do neither more nor less in any of these matters. It cannot alter the outward constitution of things; the nature of light, sound, or the other objects that surround us. It cannot prevent their affecting our senses thus and thus. And then, will not all the rest follow?

5. Make a trial, if reason can do any more, upon Lord Kames's supposition. Can it in any degree alter the nature of the universal machine? Can it change or stop the motion of any one wheel? Utterly impossible.

6. Has free-will any more power in these respects than reason? Let the trial be made upon each of these schemes.

What can it do upon Dr. Hartley's scheme? Can our free-will alter one vibration of the brain? What can it do upon the second scheme? Can it erase or alter one of the traces formed there? What can it do upon Mr. Edwards's? Can it alter the appearances of the things that surround us? Or the impressions they make upon the nerves? or the natural consequences of them? Can it do anything more on Lord Kames's scheme? Can it anyways alter the constitution of the great clock? Stand still! Look awhile into your own breast! What can your will do in any of these matters? Ah, poor free-will! Does not plain experience show, it is as impotent as your reason? Let it stand then as an eternal truth, "Without me ye can do nothing."

VI.

1. But in the same old book there is another word: "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." Here the charm is dissolved! The light breaks in, and the shadows flee away.

One of these sentences should never be viewed apart from the other: Each receives light from the other. God hath joined them together, and let no man put them asunder.

Now, taking this into the account, I care not one pin for all Dr. Hartley can say of his vibrations. Allowing the whole which he contends for, allowing all the links of his mathematical chain to be as indissolubly joined together as are the propositions in Euclid; suppose vibrations, perceptions, judgments, passions, tempers, actions, ever so naturally to follow each other: What is all this to the God of nature? Cannot he stop, alter, annihilate any or all of these, in whatever manner, and in whatever moment he pleases? Away then with all these fine-wrought speculations! Sweep them off as a spider's web! Scatter them in the wind! How helpless soever they may be "who are without God in the world;" however they may groan under the iron hand of dire necessity; necessity has no power over those "who have the Lord for their God." Each of these can say, through happy experience, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

2. Again: Allowing all the minute philosophers can say, of the traces formed in the brain, and of perceptions, judgments, passions, tempers, words, and actions naturally flowing therefrom: Whatever dreadful consequences may follow from hence, with regard to those who know not God, who have only natural reason and free will to oppose the power of nature; (which we know to have no more force than a thread of tow that has touched the fire;) under the influence of the God of nature, we laugh all our enemies to scorn. He can alter or efface all these traces in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Still, although "without Him I can do nothing," "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

3. Yet again: Let Mr. Edwards say all he will or can, concerning the outward appearances of things, as giving rise to sensations, association of ideas, passions, dispositions, and actions; allowing this to be the course of nature: What then? See One superior to nature! What is the course of nature to Him? By a word, a nod, he turneth it upside down!

His power inverted Nature owns,
Her only law his sov'reign word.

Let your chain be wrought ever so firm; He nods, and it flies in pieces; He touches it, and all the links fall asunder, as unconnected as the sand.

4. Once more: After Lord Kames has said all he pleases concerning the grand machine of the universe, and concerning the connection of its several wheels, yet it must be allowed, He that made it can unmake it; can vary every wheel, every spring, every movement, at his own good pleasure. Neither, therefore, does this imply any necessity laid either upon the thoughts, passions, or actions, of those that know and trust in Him who is the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth.

5. Ah, poor Infidel! this is no comfort to you! You must plunge on in the fatal whirlpool! You are without hope; without help! For there is only one possible help; and that you spurn. What follows then? Why

Si figit adamantinos

Summis verticibus dira necessitas

Clavos; non animum metu,

*Non mortis laqueis expedit caput.*⁶¹

O what advantage has a Christian (a real Christian) over an Infidel! He sees God! Consequently

Metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum

Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.

He tramples on inexorable fate,

And fear, and death, and hell!

6. Ah, poor predestinarian! If you are true to your doctrine, this is no comfort to you! For perhaps you are not of the elect number: If so, you are in the whirlpool too. For what is your hope? Where is your help? There is no help for you in your God. Your God! No; he is not yours; he never was; he never will be. He that made you, He that called you into being, has no pity upon you! He made you for this very end, — to damn you; to cast you headlong into a lake of fire burning with brimstone! This was prepared for you, or ever the world began! And for this you are now reserved in chains of darkness, till the decree brings forth; till, according to his eternal unchangeable, irresistible will,

You groan, you howl, you writhe in waves of fire,

And pour forth blasphemies at his desire!

O God, how long shall this doctrine stand!

AN ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY.

BRETHREN AND FATHERS,

LET it not be imputed to forwardness, vanity, or presumption, that one who is of little esteem in the Church takes upon him thus to address a body of people, to many of whom he owes the highest reverence. I owe a still higher regard to Him who I believe requires this at my hands; to the great Bishop of our souls; before whom both you and I must shortly give an account of our stewardship. It is a debt; I owe to love, to real, disinterested affection, to declare what has long been the burden of my soul. And may the God of love enable you to read these lines in the same spirit wherewith they were wrote! It will easily appear to an unprejudiced reader, that I do not speak from a spirit of anger or resentment. I know well, “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” Much less would I utter one word out of contempt; a spirit justly abhorred by God and man. Neither of these can consist with that earnest, tender love, which is the motive of my present undertaking. In this spirit I desire to cast my bread upon the waters; it is enough if I find it again after many days.

Meantime, you are sensible, love does not forbid, but rather require, plainness of speech. Has it not often constrained you, as well as me, to lay aside, not only disguise, but reserve also; and “by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God?” And while I endeavor to do this, let me earnestly entreat you, for the love of God, for the love of your own soul, for the love of the souls committed to your charge, yea, and of the whole Church of Christ, do not bias your mind, by thinking who it is that speaks; but impartially consider what is spoken. And if it be false or foolish, reject it; but do not reject “the words of truth and soberness.”

My first design was, to offer a few plain thoughts to the Clergy of our own Church only. But upon farther reflection, I see no cause for being so “straitened in my own bowels.” I am a debtor to all; and therefore, though I primarily speak to them with whom I am more immediately connected, yet I would not be understood to exclude any, of whatsoever denomination, whom God has called to “watch over the souls of others, as they that must give account.”

In order to our giving this account with joy, are there not two things which it highly imports us to consider: First, What manner of men ought we to be? Secondly, Are we such, or are we not?

I.

And, First, if we are “overseers over the Church of God, which he hath bought with his own blood,” what manner of men ought we to be, in gifts as well as in grace?

1. To begin with gifts; and,

First. With those that are from nature. Ought not a Minister to have, First, a good understanding, a clear apprehension, a sound judgment, and a capacity of reasoning with some closeness? Is not this necessary in an high degree for the work of the ministry? Otherwise, how will he be able to understand the various states of those under his care; or to steer them through a thousand difficulties and dangers, to the haven where they would be? Is it not necessary, with respect to the numerous enemies whom he has to encounter? Can a fool cope with all the men that know not God, and with all the spirits of darkness? Nay, he will neither be aware of the devices of Satan, nor the craftiness of his children.

Secondly. Is it not highly expedient that a guide of souls should have likewise some liveliness and readiness of thought? Or how will he be able, when need requires, to “answer a fool according to his folly?” How frequent is this need! seeing we almost everywhere meet with those empty yet petulant creatures, who are far “wiser in their own eyes, than seven men that can render a reason.” Reasoning, therefore, is not the weapon to

be used with them. You cannot deal with them thus. They scorn being convinced; nor can they be silenced, but in their own way.

Thirdly. To a sound understanding, and a lively turn of thought, should be joined a good memory; if it may be, ready, that you may make whatever occurs in reading or conversation your own; but, however, retentive, lest we be “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” On the contrary, “every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven,” every Teacher fitted for his work, “is like an householder who bringeth out of his treasures things new and old.”

2. And as to acquired endowments, can he take one step aright, without first a competent share of knowledge? a knowledge, First, of his own office; of the high trust in which he stands, the important work to which he is called? Is there any hope that a man should discharge his office well, if he knows not what it is? that he should acquit himself faithfully of a trust, the very nature whereof he does not understand? Nay, if he knows not the work God has given him to do, he cannot finish it.

Secondly. No less necessary is a knowledge of the Scriptures, which teach us how to teach others; yea, a knowledge of all the Scriptures; seeing scripture interprets scripture; one part fixing the sense of another. So that, whether it be true or not, that every good textuary is a good Divine, it is certain none can be a good Divine who is not a good textuary. None else can be mighty in the Scriptures; able both to instruct and to stop the mouths of gainsayers.

In order to do this accurately, ought he not to know the literal meaning of every word, verse, and chapter; without which there can be no firm foundation on which the spiritual meaning can be built? Should he not likewise be able to deduce the proper corollaries, speculative and practical, from each text; to solve the difficulties which arise, and answer the objections which are or may be raised against it; and to make a suitable application of all to the consciences of his hearers?

Thirdly. But can he do this, in the most effectual manner, without a knowledge of the original tongues? Without this, will he not frequently be

at a stand, even as to texts which regard practice only? But he will be under still greater difficulties, with respect to controverted scriptures. He will be ill able to rescue these out of the hands of any man of learning that would pervert them: For whenever an appeal is made to the original, his mouth is stopped at once.

Fourthly. Is not a knowledge of profane history, likewise, of ancient customs, of chronology and geography, though not absolutely necessary, yet highly expedient, for him that would thoroughly understand the Scriptures? since the want even of this knowledge is but poorly supplied by reading the comments of other men.

Fifthly. Some knowledge of the sciences also, is, to say the least, equally expedient. Nay, may we not say, that the knowledge of one, (whether art or science,) although now quite unfashionable, is even necessary next, and in order to, the knowledge of the Scripture itself? I mean logic. For what is this, if rightly understood, but the art of good sense? Of apprehending things clearly, judging truly, and reasoning conclusively? What is it, viewed in another light, but the art of learning and teaching; whether by convincing or persuading? What is there, then, in the whole compass of science, to be desired in comparison of it?

Is not some acquaintance with what has been termed the second part of logic, (metaphysics,) if not so necessary as this, yet highly expedient,

- (1.) In order to clear our apprehension, (without which it is impossible either to judge correctly, or to reason closely or conclusively,) by ranging our ideas under general heads? And,
- (2.) In order to understand many useful writers, who can very hardly be understood without it?

Should not a Minister be acquainted too with at least the general grounds of natural philosophy? Is not this a great help to the accurate understanding several passages of Scripture? Assisted by this, he may himself comprehend, and on proper occasions explain to others, how the invisible things of God are seen from the creation of the world; how “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his

handiwork;" till they cry out, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all."

But how far can he go in this, without some knowledge of geometry? which is likewise useful, not barely on this account, but to give clearness of apprehension, and an habit of thinking closely and connectedly.

It must be allowed, indeed, that some of these branches of knowledge are not so indispensably necessary as the rest; and therefore no thinking man will condemn the Fathers of the Church, for having, in all ages and nations, appointed some to the ministry, who, suppose they had the capacity, yet had not had the opportunity of attaining them. But what excuse is this for one who has the opportunity, and makes no use of it? What can be urged for a person who has had an University education, if he does not understand them all? Certainly, supposing him to have any capacity, to have common understanding, he is inexcusable before God and man.

Sixthly. Can any who spend several years in those seats of learning, be excused, if they do not add to that of the languages and sciences, the knowledge of the Fathers? the most authentic commentators on Scripture, as being both nearest the fountain, and eminently endued with that Spirit by whom all Scripture was given. It will be easily perceived, I speak chiefly of those who wrote before the Council of Nice. But who would not likewise desire to have some acquaintance with those that followed them? with St. Chrysostom, Basil, Jerome, Austin; and, above all, the man of a broken heart, Ephraim Syrus?

Seventhly. There is yet another branch of knowledge highly necessary for a Clergyman, and that is, knowledge of the world; a knowledge of men, of their maxims, tempers, and manners, such as they occur in real life. Without this he will be liable to receive much hurt, and capable of doing little good; as he will not know, either how to deal with men according to the vast variety of their characters, or to preserve himself from those who almost in every place lie in wait to deceive.

How nearly allied to this is the discernment of spirits! so far as it may be acquired by diligent observation. And can a guide of souls be without it? If he is, is he not liable to stumble at every step?

Eighthly. Can he be without an eminent share of prudence? that most uncommon thing which is usually called common sense? But how shall we define it? Shall we say, with the Schools, that it is *recta ratio rerum agibilium particularium*?⁶² Or is it an habitual consideration of all the circumstances of a thing, —

*Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando?*⁶³ and a facility of adapting our behavior to the various combinations of them? However it be defined, should it not be studied with all care, and cursed with all earnestness of application? For what terrible inconveniences ensue, whenever it is remarkable wanting!

Ninthly. Next to prudence or common sense, (if it be not included therein,) a Clergyman ought certainly to have some degree of good breeding; I mean address, easiness and propriety of behavior, wherever his lot is cast: Perhaps one might add, he should have (though not the stateliness; for he is “the servant of all,” yet) all the courtesy of a gentleman, joined with the correctness of a scholar. Do we want a pattern of this? We have one in St. Paul, even before Felix, Festus, King Agrippa. One can scarce help thinking he was one of the best bred men, one of the finest gentlemen in the world. O that we likewise had the skill to “please all men for their good unto edification!”

In order to this, especially in our public ministrations, would not one wish for a strong, clear, musical voice, and a good delivery, both with regard to pronunciation and action? I name these here, because they are far more acquirable than has been commonly imagined. A remarkably weak and untunable voice has by steady application become strong and agreeable. Those who stammered almost at every word, have learned to speak clearly and plainly. And many who were eminently ungraceful in their pronunciation and awkward in their gesture, have in some time, by art and labor, not only corrected that awkwardness of action and ungratefulness of

utterance, but have become excellent in both, and in these respects likewise the ornaments of their profession.

What may greatly encourage those who give themselves up to the work, with regard to all these endowments, many of which cannot be attained without considerable labor, is this: They are assured of being assisted in all their labor by Him who teacheth man knowledge. And who teacheth like him? Who, like him, giveth wisdom to the simple? How easy is it for him, (if we desire it, and believe that he is both able and willing to do this,) by the powerful, though secret, influences of his Spirit, to open and enlarge our understanding; to strengthen all our faculties; to bring to our remembrance whatsoever things are needful, and to fix and sharpen our attention to them; so that we may profit above all who depend wholly on themselves, in whatever may qualify us for our Master's work!

3. But all these things, however great they may be in themselves, are little in comparison of those that follow. For what are all other gifts, whether natural or acquired, when compared to the grace of God? And how ought this to animate and govern the whole intention, affection, and practice of a minister of Christ!

(1.) As to his intention, both in undertaking this important office, and in executing every part of it, ought; it not to be singly this, to glorify God, and to save souls from death? Is not this absolutely and indispensably necessary, before all and above all things? "If his eye be single, his whole body," his whole soul, his whole work, "will be full of light." "God who commanded light to shine out of darkness," will shine on his heart; will direct him in all his ways, will give him to see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. But if his eye, his intention be not single, if there be any mixture of meaner motives, (how much more, if those were or are his leading motives in undertaking or exercising this high office!) his "whole body," his whole soul, "will be full of darkness," even such as issues from the bottomless pit: Let not such a man think that he shall have any blessing from the Lord. No; the curse of God abideth on him. Let him not expect to enjoy any settled peace, any

solid comfort in his own breast; neither can he hope there will be any fruit of his labors, any sinners converted to God.

(2.) As to his affections. Ought not a “steward of the mysteries of God,” a shepherd of the souls for whom Christ died, to be endued with an eminent measure of love to God, and love to all his brethren? a love the same in kind, but in degree far beyond that of ordinary Christians? Call he otherwise answer the high character he bears, and the relation wherein he stands? Without this, how can he go through all the toils and difficulties which necessarily attend the faithful execution of his office? Would it be possible for a parent to go through the pain and fatigue of bearing and bringing up even one child, were it not for that vehement affection, that inexpressible σοφνη, which the Creator has given for that very end? How much less will it be possible for any Pastor, any spiritual parent, to go through the pain and labor of “travailing in birth for,” and bringing up, many children to the measure of the full stature of Christ, without a large measure of that inexpressible affection which “a stranger intermeddleth not with!”

He therefore must be utterly void of understanding, must be a madman of the highest order, who, on any consideration whatever, undertakes this office, while he is a stranger to this affection. Nay, I have often wondered that any man in his senses does not rather dig or thresh for a livelihood, than continue therein, unless he feels at least (which is *extrema linea amare*⁶⁴) such an earnest concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of souls, that he is ready to do anything, to lose anything, or to suffer anything, rather than one should perish for whom Christ died.

And is not even this degree of love to God and man utterly inconsistent with the love of the world; with the love of money or praise; with the very lowest degree of either ambition or sensuality? How much less can it consist with that poor, low, irrational, childish principle, the love of diversions? (Surely, even a man, were he neither a Minister nor a Christian, should “put away childish things.”) Not only this, but the love of pleasure, and what lies still deeper in the soul, the love of ease, flees before it.

(3.) As to his practice: “Unto the ungodly, saith God, why dost thou preach my laws?” What is a Minister of Christ, a shepherd of souls, unless he is all devoted to God? unless he abstain, with the utmost care and diligence, from every evil word and work; from all appearance of evil; yea, from the most innocent things, whereby any might be offended or made weak? Is he not called, above others, to be an example to the flock, in his private as well as public character? an example of all holy and heavenly tempers, filling the heart so as to shine through the life? Consequently, is not his whole life, if he walks worthy of his calling, one incessant labor of love; one continued tract of praising God, and helping man; one series of thankfulness and beneficence? Is he not always humble, always serious, though rejoicing evermore; mild, gentle, patient, abstinent? May you not resemble him to a guardian angel, ministering to those “who shall be heirs of salvation?” Is he not one sent forth from God, to stand between God and man, to guard and assist the poor, helpless children of men, to supply them both with light and strength, to guide them through a thousand known and unknown dangers, till at the appointed time he returns, with those committed to his charge, to his and their Father who is in heaven?

O who is able to describe such a messenger of God, faithfully executing his high office! working together with God, with the great Author both of the old and of the new creation! See his Lord, the eternal Son of God, going forth on that work of omnipotence, and creating heaven and earth by the breath of his mouth! See the servant whom he delighteth to honor, fulfilling the counsel of his will, and in his name speaking the word whereby is raised a new spiritual creation. Empowered by him, he says to the dark, unformed void of nature, “Let there be light;” “and there is light. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” He is continually employed, in what the angels of God have not the honor to do, — co-operating with the Redeemer of men in “bringing many children to glory.”

Such is a true Minister of Christ; and such, beyond all possibility of dispute, ought both you and I to be.

II.

But are we such? What are we in the respects above named? It is a melancholy but necessary consideration. It is true, many have wrote upon this subject; and some of them admirably well: Yet few, if any, at least in our nation, have carried their inquiry through all these particulars. Neither have they always spoken so plain and home as the nature of the thing required. But why did they not? Was it because they were unwilling to give pain to those whom they loved? Or were they hindered by fear of disobliging, or of incurring any temporal inconvenience? Miserable fear! Is any temporal inconvenience whatever to be laid in the balance with the souls of our brethren? Or were they prevented by shame, arising from a consciousness of their own many and great defects? Undoubtedly this might extenuate the fault, but not altogether remove it. For is it not a wise advice, “Be not ashamed when it concerneth thy soul?” especially when it concerns the souls of thousands also? In such a case may God

Set as a flint our steady face,
Harden to adamant our brow!

But is there not another hindrance? Should not compassion, should not tenderness, hinder us from giving pain? Yes, from giving unnecessary pain. But what manner of tenderness is this? It is like that of a surgeon who lets his patient be lost because he is too compassionate to probe his wounds. Cruel compassion! Let me give pain, so I may save life. Let me probe, that God may heal.

1. Are we then such as we are sensible we should be, First, with regard to natural endowments? I am afraid not. If we were, how many stumbling-blocks would be removed out of the way of serious Infidels? Alas, what terrible effects do we continually see of that common though senseless imagination, “The boy, if he is fit for nothing else, will do well enough for a Parson!” Hence it is, that we see (I would to God there were no such instance in all Great Britain or Ireland!) dull, heavy, blockish Ministers; men of no life, no spirit, no readiness of thought; who are

consequently the jest of every pert fool, every lively, airy coxcomb they meet. We see others whose memory can retain nothing; therefore they can never be men of considerable knowledge; they can never know much even of those things which they are most nearly concerned to know. Alas, they are pouring the water into a leaky vessel; and the broken cistern can hold no water! I do not say, with Plato, that “all human knowledge is nothing but remembering.” Yet certain it is that, without remembering, we can have but a small share of knowledge. And even those who enjoy the most retentive memory, find great reason still to complain,

Skill comes so slow, and life so fast does fly;
We learn so little, and forget so much!

And yet we see and bewail a still greater defect in some that are in the ministry. They want sense, they are defective in understanding, their capacity is low and shallow, their apprehension is muddy and confused; of consequence, they are utterly incapable either of forming a true judgment of things, or of reasoning justly upon anything. O how can these who themselves know nothing aright, impart knowledge to others? how instruct them in all the variety of duty, to God, their neighbor, and themselves? How will they guide them through all the mazes of error, through all the intanglements of sin and temptation? How will they apprise them of the devices of Satan, and guard them against all the wisdom of the world?

It is easy to perceive, I do not speak this for their sake; (for they are incorrigible;) but for the sake of parents, that they may open their eyes and see, a blockhead can never “do well enough for a Parson.” He may do well enough for a tradesman; so well as to gain fifty or an hundred thousand pounds. He may do well enough for a soldier; nay, (if you pay well for it,) for a very well-dressed and well-mounted officer. He may do well enough for a sailor, and may shine on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war. He may do so well, in the capacity of a lawyer or physician, as to ride in his gilt chariot. But O! think not of his being a Minister, unless you would bring a blot upon our family, a scandal upon our Church, and a reproach on the gospel, which he may murder, but cannot teach.

Are we such as we are sensible we should be, Secondly, with regard to acquired endowments? Here the matter (suppose we have common understanding) lies more directly within our own power. But under this, as well as the following heads, me thinks I would not consider at all, how many or how few are either excellent or defective. I would only desire every person who reads this to apply it to himself. Certainly some one in the nation is defective. Am not I the man?

Let us each seriously examine himself. Have I,

(1.) Such a knowledge of Scripture, as becomes him who undertakes so to explain it to others, that it may be a light in all their paths? Have I a full and clear view of the analogy of faith, which is the clue to guide me through the whole? Am I acquainted with the several parts of Scripture; with all parts of the Old Testament and the New? Upon the mention of any text, do I know the context, and the parallel places? Have I that point at least of a good Divine, the being a good textuary? Do I know the grammatical construction of the four Gospels; of the Acts; of the Epistles; and am I a master of the spiritual sense (as well as the literal) of what I read? Do I understand the scope of each book, and how every part of it tends thereto? Have I skill to draw the natural inferences deducible from each text? Do I know the objections raised to them or from them by Jews, Deists, Papists, Arians, Socinians, and all other sectaries, who more or less corrupt or cauponize the word of God? Am I ready to give a satisfactory answer to each of these objections? And have I learned to apply every part of the sacred writings, as the various states of my hearers require?

(2.) Do I understand Greek and Hebrew? Otherwise, how can I undertake, (as every Minister does,) not only to explain books which are written therein, but to defend them against all opponents? Am I not at the mercy of everyone who does understand, or even pretends to understand, the original? For which way can I confute his pretense? Do I understand the language of the Old Testament? critically? at all? Can I read into English one of David's Psalms; or even the first chapter of Genesis? Do I understand the language of the New Testament? Am

I a critical master of it? Have I enough of it even to read into English the first chapter of St. Luke? If not, how many years did I spend at school? How many at the University? And what was I doing all those years? Ought not shame to cover my face?

- (3.) Do I understand my own office? Have I deeply considered before God the character which I bear? What is it to be an Ambassador of Christ, an Envoy from the King of heaven? And do I know and feel what is implied in “watching over the souls” of men “as he that must give account?”
- (4.) Do I understand so much of profane history as tends to confirm and illustrate the sacred? Am I acquainted with the ancient customs of the Jews and other nations mentioned in Scripture? Have I a competent knowledge of chronology, that at least which refers to the sacred writings? And am I so far (if no farther) skilled in geography, as to know the situation, and give some account, of all the considerable places mentioned therein?
- (5.) Am I a tolerable master of the sciences? Have I gone through the very gate of them, logic? If not, I am not likely to go much farther, when I stumble at the threshold. Do I understand it so as to be ever the better for it? to have it always ready for use; so as to apply every rule of it, when occasion is, almost as naturally as I turn my hand? Do I understand it at all? Are not even the moods and figures above my comprehension? Do not I poorly endeavor to cover my ignorance, by affecting to laugh at their barbarous names? Can I even reduce an indirect mood to a direct; an hypothetic to a categorical syllogism? Rather, have not my stupid indolence and laziness made me very ready to believe, what the little wits and pretty gentlemen affirm, “that logic is good for nothing?” It is good for this at least, (wherever it is understood) to make people talk less; by showing them both what is, and what is not, to the point; and how extremely hard it is to prove anything. Do I understand metaphysics; if not the depths of the Schoolmen, the subtleties of Scotus or Aquinas, yet the first rudiments, the general principles, of that useful science? Have I conquered so much of it, as to clear

my apprehension and range my ideas under proper heads; so much as enables me to read with ease and pleasure, as well as profit, Dr. Henry More's Works, Malebranche's "Search after Truth," and Dr. Clarke's "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God?" Do I understand natural philosophy? If I have not gone deep therein, have I digested the general grounds of it? Have I mastered Gravesande, Keill, Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, with his "Theory of Light and Colors?" In order thereto, have I laid in some stock of mathematical knowledge? Am I master of the mathematical A B C of Euclid's Elements? If I have not gone thus far, if I am such a novice still, what have I been about ever since I came from school?

- (6.) Am I acquainted with the Fathers; at least with those venerable men who lived in the earliest ages of the Church? Have I read over and over the golden remains of Clemens Romanus, of Ignatius and Polycarp; and have I given one reading, at least, to the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Cyprian?
- (7.) Have I any knowledge of the world? Have I studied men, (as well as books,) and observed their tempers, maxims, and manners? Have I learned to beware of men; to add the wisdom of the serpent to the innocence of the dove? Has God given me by nature, or have I acquired, any measure of the discernment of spirits; or of its nearly, prudence, enabling me on all occasions to consider all circumstances, and to suit and vary my behavior according to the various combinations of them? Do I labor never to be rude or ill-mannered; not to be remarkably wanting in good-breeding? Do I endeavor to copy after those who are eminent for address and easiness of behavior? Am I (though never light or trifling, either in word or action, yet) affable and courteous to all men? And do I omit no means which is in my power, and consistent with my character, of "pleasing all men" with whom I converse, "for their good to edification?"

If I am wanting even in these lowest endowments, shall I not frequently regret the want? How often shall I move heavily, and be far less useful

than I might have been! How much more shall I suffer in my usefulness, if I have wasted the opportunities I once had of acquainting myself with the great lights of antiquity, the Ante-Nicene Fathers; or if I have droned away those precious hours wherein I might have made myself master of the sciences! How poorly must I many times drag on, for want of the helps which I have vilely cast away! But is not my case still worse, if I have loitered away the time wherein I should have perfected myself in Greek and Hebrew? I might before this have been critically acquainted with these treasuries of sacred knowledge. But they are now hid from my eyes; they are close locked up, and I have no key to open them. However, have I used all possible diligence to supply that grievous defect, (so far as it can be supplied now,) by the most accurate knowledge of the English Scriptures? Do I meditate therein day and night? Do I think (and consequently speak) thereof, “when I sit in the house, and when I walk by the way; when I lie down, and when I rise up?” By this means have I at length attained a thorough knowledge, as of the sacred text, so of its literal and spiritual meaning? Otherwise, how can I attempt to instruct others therein? Without this, I am a blind guide indeed! I am absolutely incapable of teaching my flock what I have never learned myself; no more fit to lead souls to God, than I am to govern the world.

2. And yet there is a higher consideration than that of gifts; higher than any or all of these joined together; a consideration in view of which all external and all intellectual endowments vanish into nothing. Am I such as I ought to be, with regard to the grace of God? The Lord God enable me to judge aright of this!

And,

- (1.) What was my intention in taking upon me this office and ministry? What was it, in taking charge of this parish, either as Minister or Curate? Was it always, and is it now, wholly and solely to glorify God, and save souls? Has my eye been singly fixed on this, from the beginning hitherto? Had I never, have I not now, any mixture in my intention; any alloy of baser metal? Had I, or have I, no thought of worldly gain; “filthy lucre,” as the Apostle terms it? Had I at first, have I now, no secular view? no eye to

honor or preferment? to a plentiful income; or, at least, a competency? a warm and comfortable livelihood?

Alas! my brother! “If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” Was a comfortable livelihood, then, your motive for entering into the ministry? And do you avow this in the face of the sun, and without one blush upon your cheek? I cannot compare you with Simon Magus; you are many degrees beneath him. He offered to give money for the gift of God, the power of conferring the Holy Ghost. Hereby, however, he showed that he set an higher value on the gift, than on the money which he would have parted with for it. But you do not; you set a far higher value on the money than on the gift; insomuch that you do not desire, you will not accept of, the gift, unless the money accompany it! The Bishop said, when you was ordained, “Receive thou the Holy Ghost.” But that was the least of your care. Let who will receive this, so you receive the money, the revenue of a good benefice. While you minister the word and sacraments before God, he gives the Holy Ghost to those who duly receive them: So that, “through your hands,” likewise, “the Holy Ghost is,” in this sense, “given” now. But you have little concern whether he be or not; so little, that you will minister no longer, he shall be given no more, either through your lips or hands, if you have no more money for your labor. O Simon, Simon! what a saint wert thou, compared to many of the most honorable men now in Christendom!

Let not any either ignorantly or wilfully mistake me. I would not “muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.” I know the spiritual “laborer,” too, “is worthy of his reward;” and that, if “we sow unto” our flock “spiritual things,” it is meet that we “reap of their carnal things.” I do not therefore blame, no, not in any degree, a Minister’s taking a yearly salary; but I blame his seeking it. The thing blamable is the having it in his view, as the motive, or any part of the motive, for entering into this sacred office.

*Hic nigrae succus loliginis, haec est
65
Aerugo mera.*

If preferment, or honor, or profit was in his eye, his eye was not single. And our Lord knew no medium between a single and an evil eye. The eye,

therefore, which is not single is evil. It is a plain, adjudged case. He then that has any other design in undertaking or executing the office of a Minister than purely this, to glorify God and save souls, his eye is not single. Of consequence, it is evil; and therefore his “whole body” must be “full of darkness.” “The light which is in” him “is” very “darkness;” darkness covers his whole soul; he has no solid peace; he has no blessing from God; and there is no fruit of his labors.

It is no wonder that they who see no harm in this, see no harm in adding one living to another, and, if they can, another to that; yet still wiping their mouth, and saying, they have done no evil. In the very first step, their eye was not single; therefore their mind was filled with darkness. So they stumble on still in the same mire, till their feet “stumble on the dark mountains.”

It is pleaded, indeed, that “a small living will not maintain a large family.” *Maintain!* How? It will not clothe them “in purple and fine linen;” nor enable them to fare “sumptuously every day:” But will not the living you have now afford you and yours the plain necessities, yea, and conveniences, of life? Will it not maintain you in the frugal, Christian simplicity which becomes a Minister of Christ? It will not maintain you in pomp and grandeur, in elegant luxury, in fashionable sensuality. So much the better. If your eyes were open, whatever your income was, you would flee from these as from hell-fire.

It has been pleaded, Secondly, “By having a larger income, I am able to do more good.” But dare you aver, in the presence of God, that it was singly with this view, only for this end, that you sought a larger income? If not, you are still condemned before God; your eye was not single. Do not therefore quibble and evade. This was not your motive of acting. It was not the desire of doing more good, whether to the souls or bodies of men; it was not the love of God: (You know it was not; your own conscience is as a thousand witnesses:) But it was “the love of money,” and “the desire of other things,” which animated you in this pursuit. If, then, the word of God is true, you are in darkness still: It fills and covers your soul.

I might add, a larger income does not necessarily imply a capacity of doing more spiritual good. And this is the highest kind of good. It is good to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked: But it is a far nobler good to “save souls from death,” to “pluck” poor “brands out of the burning.” And it is that to which you are peculiarly called, and to which you have solemnly promised to “bend all your studies and endeavors.” But you are by no means sure, that, by adding a second living to your first, you shall be more capable of doing good in this kind, than you would have been had you laid out all your time, and all your strength, on your first flock.

“However, I shall be able to do more temporal good.” You are not sure even of this. “If riches increase, they are increased that eat them.” Perhaps your expenses may rise proportionally with your income. But if not, if you have a greater ability, shall you have a greater willingness, to do good? You have no reason in the world to believe this. There are a thousand instances of the contrary. How many have less will when they have more power! Now they have more money, they love it more; when they had little, they did their “diligence gladly to give of that little;” but since they have had much, they are so far from “giving plenteously,” that they can hardly afford to give at all.

“But by my having another living, I maintain a valuable man, who might otherwise want the necessaries of life.” I answer,

- (1.) Was this your whole and sole motive in seeking that other living? If not, this plea will not clear you from the charge; your eye was not single.
- (2.) If it was, you may put it beyond dispute; you may prove at once the purity of your intention: — Make that valuable man Rector of one of your parishes, and you are clear before God and man.

But what can be pleaded for those who have two or more flocks, and take care of none of them? who just look at them now and then for a few days, and then remove to a convenient distance, and say, “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry?”

Some years ago I was asking a plain man, "Ought not he who feeds the flock, to eat of the milk of the flock?" He answered: "Friend, I have no objection to that. But what is that to him who does not feed the flock? He stands on the far side of the hedge and feeds himself. It is another who feeds the flock; and ought he to have the milk of the flock? What canst thou say for him?" Truly, nothing at all; and he will have nothing to say for himself, when the great Shepherd shall pronounce that just sentence, "Bind" the unprofitable servant "hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness."

I have dwelt the longer on this head, because a right intention is the first point of all, and the most necessary of all; inasmuch as the want of this cannot be supplied by anything else whatsoever. It is the setting out wrong; a fault never to be amended, unless you return to the place whence you came, and set out right. It is impossible therefore to lay too great stress upon a single eye, a pure intention; without which, all our sacrifice, our prayers, sermons, and sacraments, are an abomination to the Lord.

I cannot dismiss this important article, without touching upon one thing more. How many are directly concerned therein, I leave to the Searcher of hearts.

You have been settled in a living or a curacy for some time. You are now going to exchange it for another. Why do you do this? For what reason do you prefer this before your former living or curacy? "Why, I had but fifty pounds a year where I was before, and now I shall have a hundred." And is this your real motive of acting? the true reason why you make the exchange? "It is: And is it not a sufficient reason?" Yes, for a Heathen; but not for one who calls himself a Christian.

Perhaps a more gross infatuation than this was never yet known upon earth. There goes one who is commissioned to be an ambassador of Christ, a shepherd of never-dying souls, a watchman over the Israel of God, a steward of the mysteries which "angels desire to look into." Where is he going? "To London, to Bristol, to Northampton." Why does he go thither? "To get more money." A tolerable reason for driving a herd of bullocks to one market rather than the other; though if a drover does this without any

farther view, he acts as a Heathen, not a Christian. But what a reason for leaving the immortal souls over whom the Holy Ghost had made you overseer! And yet this is the motive which not only influences in secret, but is acknowledged openly and without a blush! Nay, it is excused, justified, defended; and that not by a few, here and there, who are apparently void both of piety and shame; but by numbers of seemingly religious men, from one end of England to the other!

(2.) Am I, Secondly, such as I ought to be, with regard to my affections? I am taken from among, and ordained for, men, in things pertaining to God. I stand between God and man, by the authority of the great Mediator, in the nearest and most endearing relation both to my Creator and to my fellow-creatures. Have I accordingly given my heart to God, and to my brethren for his sake? Do I love God with all my soul and strength? and my neighbor, every man, as myself? Does this love swallow me up, possess me whole, constitute my supreme happiness? Does it animate all my passions and tempers, and regulate all my powers and faculties? Is it the spring which gives rise to all my thoughts, and governs all my words and actions? If it does, not unto me, but unto God be the praise! If it does not, “God be merciful to me a sinner!”

At least, do I feel such a concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of men, that I am ready to do any thing, however contrary to my natural inclination, to part with anything, however agreeable to me, to suffer anything, however grievous to flesh and blood, so I may save one soul from hell? Is this my ruling temper at all times and in all places? Does it make all my labor light? If not, what a weariness is it! what a drudgery! Had I not far better hold the plough?

But is it possible this should be my ruling temper, if I still love the world? No, certainly, if I “love the world, the love of the Father is not in” me. The love of God is not in me, if I love money, if I love pleasure, so called, or diversion. Neither is it in me, if I am a lover of honor or praise, or of dress, or of good eating and drinking. Nay,

even indolence, or the love of ease, is inconsistent with the love of God.

What a creature then is a covetous, an ambitious, a luxurious, an indolent, a diversion-loving Clergyman! Is it any wonder that infidelity should increase, where any of these are to be found? that many, comparing their spirit with their profession, should blaspheme that worthy name whereby they are called? But “woe be unto him by whom the offense cometh! It were good for that man if he had never been born.” It were good for him now, rather than he should continue to turn the lame out of the way, “that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the depth of the sea!”

- (3.) May not you who are of a better spirit consider, Thirdly, Am I such as I ought to be with regard to my practice? Am I, in my private life, wholly devoted to God? Am I intent upon this one thing, — to do in every point “not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me?” Do I carefully and resolutely abstain from every evil word and work? “from all appearance of evil?” from all indifferent things, which might lay a stumbling-block in the way of the weak? Am I zealous of good works? As I have time, do I do good to all men? and that in every kind, and in as high a degree as I am capable?

How do I behave in the public work whereunto I am called, — in my pastoral character? Am I “a pattern” to my “flock, in word, in behavior, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity?” Is my “word,” my daily conversation, “always in grace,” always “meet to minister grace to the hearers?” Is my behavior suitable to the dignity of my calling? Do I walk as Christ also walked? Does the love of God and man not only fill my heart, but shine through my whole conversation? Is the spirit, the temper which appears in all my words and actions, such as allows me to say with humble boldness, Herein “be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ?” Do all who have spiritual discernment take knowledge (judging of the tree by its fruits) that “the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God;” and that in all “simplicity and godly sincerity I have my conversation in the world?” Am

I exemplary pure from all worldly desire, from all vile and vain affections? Is my life one continued labor of love, one tract of praising God and helping man? Do I in everything see “Him who is invisible?” And “beholding with open face the glory of the Lord,” am I “changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord?”

Brethren, is not this our calling, even as we are Christians; but; more eminently as we are Ministers of Christ? And why (I will not say, do we fall short, but why) are we satisfied with falling so short of it? Is there any necessity laid upon us, of sinking so infinitely below our calling? Who hath required this at our hands? Certainly, not He by whose authority we minister. Is not his will the same with regard to us, as with regard to his first Ambassadors? Is not his love, and is not his power, still the same, as they were in the ancient days? Know we not, that Jesus Christ “is the same yesterday, today, and forever?” Why then may not you be as “burning and as shining lights,” as those that shone seventeen hundred years ago? Do you desire to partake of the same burning love, of the same shining holiness? Surely you do. You cannot but be sensible it is the greatest blessing which can be bestowed on any child of man. Do you design it; aim at it; “press on to” this “mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?” Do you constantly and earnestly pray for it? Then, as the Lord liveth, ye shall attain. Only let us pray on, and “tarry at Jerusalem, till we be endued with power from on high.” Let us continue in all the ordinances of God, particularly in meditating on his word, “in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily,” and, “as we have time, doing good to all men;” and then assuredly “the great Shepherd” of us and our flocks will “make us perfect in every good work to do his will, and work in us all that is well pleasing in his sight!” This is the desire and prayer of

Your Brother and Servant,

in our common Lord

JOHN WESLEY.

LONDON, *February 6, 1756.*

A LETTER

TO

THE REV. MR. TOOGOOD, OF EXETER;

OCCASIONED BY HIS “DISSENT FROM THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND FULLY JUSTIFIED.”

SIR,

IF you fairly represent Mr. White’s arguments, they are liable to much exception. But whether they are or no, your answers to them are far from unexceptionable. To the manner of the whole I object, you are not serious; you do not write as did those excellent men, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Howe, Dr. Calamy, who seem always to speak, not laughing, but weeping. To the matter I object, that if your argument hold, as it is proposed in your very title-page; if “a dissent from our Church be the genuine consequence of the allegiance due to Christ;” then all who do not dissent have renounced that allegiance, and are in a state of damnation!

I have not leisure to consider all that you advance in proof of this severe sentence. I can only at present examine your main argument, which indeed contains the strength of your cause: “My separation from the Church of England,” you say, “is a debt I owe to God, and an act of allegiance due to Christ, the only Lawgiver in the Church.” (Page 2.)

Again: “The controversy turns upon one single point, Has the Church power to decree rites and ceremonies? If it has this power, then all the objections of the Dissenters, about kneeling at the Lord’s supper, and the like, are impertinent: If it has no power at all of this kind, yea, if Christ,

the great Lawgiver and King of the Church, hath expressly commanded, that no power of this kind shall ever be claimed or ever be yielded by any of his followers; then the Dissenters will have honor before God for protesting against such usurpation.” (Page 3.)

I join issue on this single point: “If Christ hath expressly commanded, that no power of this kind shall ever be claimed, or ever yielded, by any of his followers;” then are all who yield it, all Churchmen, in a state of damnation, as much as those who “deny the Lord that bought them.” But if Christ hath not expressly commanded this, we may go to church, and yet not go to hell.

To the point then: The power I speak of is a power of decreeing rites and ceremonies, of appointing such circumstantials (suppose) of public worship as are in themselves purely indifferent, being no way determined in Scripture.

And the question is, “Hath Christ expressly commanded, that this power shall never be claimed, nor ever yielded, by any of his followers?” This I deny. How do you prove it?

Why, thus: “If the Church of England has this power, so has the Church of Rome.” (Page 4.) Allowed. But this is not to the purpose. I want “the express command of Christ.”

You say, “Secondly, The persons who have this power in England, are not the Clergy, but the Parliament.” (Pages 8, 9.) Perhaps so. But this also strikes wide. Where is “the express command of Christ?”

You ask, “Thirdly, How came the civil Magistrate by this power?” (Page 11.) “Christ commands us to ‘call no man upon earth father and master;’ that is, to acknowledge no authority of any in matters of religion.” (Page 12.) At length we are come to the express command, which, according to your interpretation, is express enough; “that is, Acknowledge no authority of any in matters of religion;” own no power in any to appoint any circumstance of public worship, anything pertaining to decency and order. But this interpretation is not allowed. It is the very point in question.

We allow, Christ does here expressly command, to acknowledge no such authority of any, as the Jews paid their Rabbies, whom they usually styled either Fathers or Masters; implicitly believing all they affirmed, and obeying all they enjoined. But we deny, that he expressly commands, to acknowledge no authority of governors, in things purely indifferent, whether they relate to the worship of God, or other matters.

You attempt to prove it by the following words: “‘One is your Master’ and Lawgiver, ‘even Christ; and all ye are brethren;’ (Matthew 23:8, 9;) all Christians; having no dominion over one another.” True; no such dominion as their Rabbies claimed; but in all things indifferent, Christian Magistrates have dominion. As to your inserting, “and Lawgiver,” in the preceding clause, you have no authority from the text; for it is not plain, that our Lord is here speaking of himself in that capacity. *Διδασκαλος*, the word here rendered “Master,” you well know, conveys no such idea. It should rather have been translated “Teacher.” And indeed the whole text primarily relates to doctrines.

But you cite another text: “The Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; but it shall not be so among you.” (Matthew 20:25.) Very good; that is, Christian Pastors shall not exercise such dominion over their flock, as heathen Princes do over their subjects. Most sure; but, without any violation of this, they may appoint how things shall “be done decently and in order.”

“But Christ is the sole Lawgiver, Judge, and Sovereign in His Church.” (Page 12.) He is the sole *sovereign* Judge and Lawgiver. But it does not follow (what you continually infer) that there are no subordinate judges therein; nor, that there are none who have power to make regulations therein in subordination to Him. King George is sovereign judge and lawgiver in these realms. But are there no subordinate judges? Nay, are there not many who have power to make rules or laws in their own little communities? And how does this “invade his authority and throne?” Not at all, unless they contradict the laws of his kingdom.

“However, he alone has authority to fix the terms of communion for his followers, or Church.” (*Ibid.*) “And the terms he has fixed, no men on earth have authority to set aside or alter.” This I allow, (although it is another question,) none has authority to exclude from the Church of Christ those who comply with the terms which Christ has fixed. But not to admit into the society called the Church of England, or, not to administer the Lord’s supper to them, is not the same thing with “excluding men from the Church of Christ;” Unless this society be the whole Church of Christ, which neither you nor I will affirm. This society therefore may scruple to receive those as members, who do not observe her rules in things indifferent, without pretending “to set aside or alter the terms which Christ has fixed” for admission into the Christian Church; and yet without “lording it over God’s heritage, or usurping Christ’s throne.” Nor does all “the alliance we owe Him” at all hinder our “obeying them that; have the rule over us,” in things of a purely indifferent nature. Rather, our allegiance to Him requires our obedience to them. In being “their servants,” thus far we are “Christ’s servants.” We obey his general command, by obeying our governors in particular instances.

Hitherto you have produced no express command of Christ to the contrary. Nor do you attempt to show any such, but strike off from the question for the twelve or fourteen pages following. But after these you say, “The subjects of Christ are expressly commanded to receive nothing as parts of religion, which are only ‘commandments of men.’ (Matthew 15:9.)” (Page 26.) We grant it; but this is no command at all, not to “obey those who have the rule over us.” And we must obey them in things indifferent, or not at all. For in things which God hath forbidden, should such be enjoined, we dare not obey. Nor need they enjoin what God hath commanded.

Upon the whole, we agree that Christ is the only “supreme Judge and Lawgiver in the Church;” I may add, and in the world; for “there is no power,” no secular power, “but of God;” of God who “was manifested in the flesh, who is over all, blessed forever.” But we do not at all agree in the inference which you would draw therefrom, namely, that there is no subordinate judge or lawgiver in the Church. You may just as well infer; that there is no subordinate judge or lawgiver in the world. Yea, there is,

both in the one and the other. And in obeying these subordinate powers, we do not, as you aver, renounce the Supreme; no, but we obey them for his sake.

We believe, it is not only innocent, but our bounded duty, so to do; in all things of an indifferent nature to submit ourselves “to every ordinance of man;” and that “for the Lord’s sake;” because we think he has not forbidden but expressly commanded it. Therefore, “as a genuine fruit of our allegiance to Christ,” we submit both to the King and governors sent by him, so far as possibly we can, without breaking some plain command of God. And you have not yet brought any plain command to justify that assertion, that “we may not submit either to the King, or to governors sent by him, in any circumstance relating to the worship of God.”

Here is a plain declaration, “There is no power but of God; the powers that exist are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power,” (without an absolute necessity, which in things indifferent there is not,) “resisteth the ordinance of God.” And here is a plain command grounded thereon: “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.” Now, by what scripture does it appear, that we are not to be subject in any thing pertaining to the worship of God? This is an exception which we cannot possibly allow, without clear warrant from holy writ. And we apprehend, those of the Church of Rome alone can decently plead for such an exception. It does not sound well in the mouth of a Protestant, to claim an exemption from the jurisdiction of the civil powers in all matters of religion, and in the minutest circumstance relating to the Church.

Another plain command is that mentioned but now: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.” And this we shall think ourselves hereby fully authorized to do, in things of a religious, as well as a civil, nature, till you can produce plain, explicit proof from Scripture, that we must submit in the latter, but not in the former. We cannot find any such distinction in the Bible; and till we find it there, we cannot receive it, but must believe our allegiance to Christ requires submission to our governors in all things indifferent.

This I speak, even on supposition that the things in question were enjoined merely by the King and Parliament. If they were, what then? Then I would submit to them “for the Lord’s sake.” So that in all your parade, either with regard to King George or Queen Anne, there may be wit, but no wisdom; no force, no argument, till you can support this distinction from plain testimony of Scripture.

Till this is done, it can never be proved that “a dissent from the Church of England” (whether it can be justified from other topics or no) “is the genuine and just consequence of the allegiance which is due to Christ, as the only Lawgiver in the Church.” As you proposed to “bring the controversy to this short and plain issue, to let it turn on this single point,” I have done so; I have spoken to this alone; although I could have said something on many other points which you have advanced as points of the utmost certainty, although they are far more easily affirmed than proved. But I wave them for the present; hoping this may suffice to show any fair and candid inquirer, that it is very possible to be united to Christ and to the Church of England at the same time; that we need not separate from the Church, in order to preserve our allegiance to Christ; but may be firm members thereof, and yet “have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man.”

I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

BRISTOL, January 10, 1758.

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

CONCERNING

GODFATHERS AND GODMOTHERS.

1. IN the ancient Church, when baptism was administered, there were usually two or more sponsors (so Tertullian calls them, an hundred years after the death of St. John) for every person to be baptized. As these were witnesses, before God and the Church, of the solemn engagement those persons then entered into, so they undertook (as the very word implies) to watch over those souls in a peculiar manner, to instruct, admonish, exhort, and build them up in the faith once delivered to the saints. These were considered as a kind of spiritual parents to the baptized, whether they were infants or at man's estate; and were expected to supply whatever spiritual helps were wanting either through the death or neglect of the natural parents.

2 These have been retained in the Christian Church from the earliest times, as the reason for them was the same in all ages. In our Church they are termed, by a proper and expressive name, godfathers and godmothers. And it is appointed, "that there shall be for every male child to be baptized, two godfathers and one godmother; and for every female, one godfather and two godmothers."

3. But it is objected against these,

(1.) That there is no mention of godfathers and godmothers in Scripture.

(2.) That many undertake this without ever considering what they undertake, or once seriously thinking how to perform it. And,

(3.) That no serious man would undertake it, because it is impossible to perform it.

4. I answer, First, it is undoubtedly true, godfathers and godmothers are not mentioned in Scripture; and therefore it cannot be said they are absolutely necessary, or that baptism cannot be administered without them. But yet it may be said they are highly expedient; for when they are prudently chosen, they may be of unspeakable use to the persons baptized, and a great relief and comfort to the parents of them.

5. I answer, Secondly, it is too true that many undertake this solemn office without ever considering what they undertake; giddy, ignorant persons, if not openly vicious, who never once seriously think how to perform it. But whose fault is this? It is not the fault of the Church, which carefully guards against this very thing, by ordering “that none but communicants be admitted to be godfathers or godmothers.” Now, communicants we may presume to be serious persons who will both consider and perform what they undertake. It is altogether the fault of those foolish parents who will, on any account whatever, either desire or suffer those to be sponsors for their children, that do not take care of their own souls. It is these inconsiderate and cruel men, who have no compassion for their own flesh, that deprive their children of all the benefits of this wise institution, and bring a scandal on the institution itself, by their wicked abuse of it. I therefore earnestly exhort all who have any concern, either for their own or their children’s souls, at all hazards to procure such persons to be sponsors, as truly fear God. Regard not whether they are rich or poor; and if they are poor, see that it be no expense to them. You will then tear up by the roots one of the most plausible objections which can be made against this primitive custom.

6. For, Thirdly, there is no reason why any truly serious man should scruple to undertake the office. If you suppose godfathers and godmothers undertake what is impossible to perform, you entirely mistake. And your mistake lies here: You think they undertake what they do not. Do not you think the sponsors themselves undertake or promise that the child shall “renounce the devil and all his works, constantly believe God’s holy word, and obediently keep his commandments?” Whereas in truth they neither

undertake nor promise any such thing. When they answer, “I renounce them all,” “This I steadfastly believe,” “I will” (obediently keep God’s holy will and commandments), they promise nothing at all; they engage for nothing; it is another person that promises all this. Whatever is then promised or undertaken it is not by them, but by the child. It is his part, not theirs. So the Church tells you expressly: “This infant must for *his* part promise.” It is he promises in these words, not they. So again: “This child hath promised to renounce the devil, to believe in God, and to serve him.” If it be said, “But why are those questions inserted, which seem to mean what they really do not?” I answer, I did not insert them, and should not be sorry had they not been inserted at all. I believe the compilers of our Liturgy inserted them because they were used in all the ancient Liturgies. And their deep reverence for the primitive Church made them excuse some impropriety of expression.

7. What then is your part, who are sponsors for the child? This likewise is expressly told you: “It is your part to see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he hath here made by you. You shall call upon him to hear sermons, and shall provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul’s health; and that this child may be virtuously brought up, to lead a godly and a Christian life.”

8. Can anything then be plainer than what you do not, and what you do, undertake? You do not undertake that he shall renounce the devil and serve God; this the baptized himself undertakes. You do undertake to see that he be taught what things a Christian ought to know and believe. And what is there in this which is impossible? which any serious person may not perform?

9. If then you that are parents will be so wise and kind to your children as to wave every other consideration, and to choose for their sponsors those persons alone who truly fear and serve God; if some of you who love God, and love one another, agree to perform this office of love for each other’s children; and if all you who undertake it perform it faithfully, with all the wisdom and power God hath given you; what a foundation of

holiness and happiness may be laid, even to your late posterity! Then it may justly be hoped, that not only you and your house, but also the children which shall be born, shall serve the Lord.

ATHLONE, August 6, 1752.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE CONSECRATION OF CHURCHES AND BURIAL-GROUNDS.

1. It has been a custom for some ages, in Roman Catholic countries, to have a particular form of consecration for all churches and chapels: And not for these only, but for every thing pertaining to them; such as fonts, chalices, bells, sacerdotal vestments, and churchyards in particular. And all these customs universally prevailed in England, as long as it was under the Papal power.
2. From the time of our Reformation from Popery, most of these customs fell into disuse. Unconsecrated bells were rung without scruple, and unconsecrated vestments worn. But some of them remained still; the consecration of churches and churchyards in particular; and many scrupled the performing divine service in an unconsecrated church, and could not consent that their bodies should be buried in unconsecrated ground.
3. Accordingly, the consecrating of churches and churchyards has been practiced in England ever since. But it is a thing purely indifferent, being neither forbidden nor established by law. The case is different in Ireland. While the Earl of Stafford was Lord Lieutenant of that kingdom, a law was made for the consecration, not only of churches, but of churchyards also. And a form of consecration for both was inserted in the Common Prayer-Book, which is used at this day; much resembling that which Archbishop Laud used in the consecration of St. Katherine Creed's church, in London.
4. But such a law has never passed in England, much less been inserted in our Common Prayer-Book. However, such consecration has been generally

practiced, though not authorized by the legislature. “Is it then illegal?” That word is capable of a twofold meaning. It may mean, either, without any law in its favor, or, against law. I do not conceive it to be illegal in the latter sense. Perhaps it is in the former: I do not know any law that enjoins or even permits it.

5. And certainly, as it is not enjoined by the law of the land, so it is not enjoined by the law of God. Where do we find one word in the New Testament enjoining any such thing? Neither do I remember any precedent of it in the purest ages of the Church. It seems to have entered, and gradually spread itself, with the other innovations and superstitions of the Church of Rome. “Do you think it, then, a superstitious practice?” Perhaps it is not, if it be practiced as a thing indifferent. But if it be done as a necessary thing, then it is flatly superstitious.

6. For this reason I never wished that any Bishop should consecrate any chapel or burial-ground of mine. Indeed, I should not dare to suffer it; as I am clearly persuaded the thing is wrong in itself, being not authorized either by any law of God, or by any law of the land. In consequence of which, I conceive, that either the clerk or the sexton may as well consecrate the church or the churchyard, as the Bishop.

7. With regard to the latter, the churchyard, I know not who could answer that plain question: “You say, this is consecrated ground, so many feet broad, and so many long. But pray how deep is the consecrated ground?” — “*Deep!* What does that signify?” O, a great deal: For if my grave be dug too deep, I may happen to get out of the consecrated ground: And who can tell what unhappy consequences may follow from this?

8. I take the whole of this practice to be a mere relic of Romish superstition. And I wonder that any sensible Protestant should think it right to countenance it; much more, that any reasonable man should plead for the necessity of it! Surely, it is high time now that we should be guided, not by custom, but by Scripture and reason.

DUMFRIES, *May* 14, 1788.

NOTES

1. Non omnibus omnia — ita tamen cuilibet credenti tunc data sit admirabilis facultas, quae se, non semper quidem, sed data occasione explicaret. — GROTIUS in Marcum 16:17.
2. Accipiens panem, suum corpus esse confitebatur; et temperamentum calicis suum sanguinem confirmavit.
3. Ως επιπαν ιδιωται το τοιουτον πραττουσι. — Origen. Cont. Cels, 1. vii.
4. Adjicient multa de autoritate cujusque doctoris haeretici, illos mortuos suscitasse, debiles rejormasse, etc.
5. Απεκαλυψεν ουν ημιν παντα οσα και απο των γραφων δια της χαριτος αυτει νενοηκαμεν — Dial. par. 2.
6. Ουδε γαρ δυναμις εμοι τοιαυτη τις εσιν, αλλα χαρις παρα Θεου εδοθη μοι εις το συνιεναι τας γραφας αυτου.) — Dial. par. 2.
7. Utar ea admonitione, qua me Dominus uti jubet. Epis. 9.
8. Non humana suffragatione, sed divina dignatione, conjunctum. Epis. 34.
9. Necesse est, excidat sensu.
10. It is Greek: It cannot be read. — EDIT.
11. Καιπερ' ανατου ορισθεντος κατα των διδασκοντων, η ολως ομολογουντων το ονομα του Χρισου, ημεις πανταχου και ασπαζομεθα και διδασκομεν. Ει δε και υμεις ως εχθροι εντευξεσθε τοιοδε τοις λογοις, ου πλεον τι δυνασθε του φονευειν. Justin Martyr. Apol. 1, page 69.
12. It flows on, and will forever flow.
13. Dicimus, definimus, pronunciamus absolute necessarium ad salutem, onni humanae creaturae subesse Romano Pontifici. Extravag. c. Unam sanctam de Majoritate et Obedientia.
 “We say, define, and pronounce, that it is absolutely necessary to salvation, for every man to be subject to the Pope of Rome.”
14. Bellarm. De Eccles. milit. 1. 3, c. 2, sec. Nostra, autem sententia; et cap 5, sec. Respondeo neminem.

15. Sacrosancta synodus omnibus Christi fidelibus interdicat, ne posthac de sanctissima Eucharistia aliter credere, docere, aut praedicare audeant, quam ut est hoc praesenti decreto explicatum, atque difinitum. — Concil. Trid. Sess. 13, Decret. de Euchar. So again, Sess. 25, Decret. de Purgatorio. And there are above a hundred anathemas in that Council in point of doctrine against such as do not so believe.
16. Hanc veram catholicam fidem, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest: That is, “This is the true Catholic faith, without which no man can be saved.” — Bulla Pii IV., super Form. Juram.
17. These books are so sacred, as that they are of infallible truth. — Bellarm. De Verbo, 1. 1, c. 10, sec. Ecclesia vera.
18. Wherefore doth the Council add, “with all their parts;” unless that all should understand those parts also, about which there was some time a dispute, to belong to the sacred canon of the Bible? — Ibid., c. 7, sec. Denique.
19. Bellarm. de Indulgent. 1. 1, c. 9, init. “Plenary indulgence doth take away all the punishment due to sin.” Ibid. sec. Indulgentia Quadragen.)
20. Ibid. c. 7, sec. Et quidem.).
21. This is implied Concil. Trid. Sess. 21, c. 9, though it is called by the soft name of alms.
22. So many are granted to particular churches in Rome, for the benefit of pilgrims.
23. So those that upon his motion took up arms against the Albigenses, had by an indulgence the promise of an eternal reward. Baron. ad A. D. 1179 n. 7.
24. So Pope Alexander VI. granted to those that recited this prayer to the blessed Virgin, and St. Ann her mother, 30,000 years’ indulgence. “Hail Mary! full of grace! The Lord be with thee, thy grace with me! Blessed by thou among women; and blessed be St. Ann thy mother, from whom, O Virgin Mary, thou hast proceeded without sin and spot; but of thee hath Jesus Christ been born, the Son of the living God. Amen.” Thesaur. Var. Exercit. in Grat. Sodal. B. V. M. Bruxel. Edit. 2 An. 1658, p. 287.

25. "That supererogation is necessary to indulgence, no one can deny." saith Bellarm. de Indulg. 1. 1, c. 2, init.
26. So Pope Clem. VI., Constit. Extrav. in Bellarm, Ibid. sec. ult.
27. **Εδουλευσατε**, "Ye did service to them that were no gods." (Galatians 4:8.), **Ελατρευσαν**, "They serve the creature." Romans 1:25.)
28. "Our Lord Jesus Christ," saith he, "hath knit Christians together, with sacraments most few in number, most easy to be kept, most excellent in signification; as are baptism and the Lord's supper." — Epist. ad Januar. 118.
29. N. B. Where this mark (†) stands, the sign of the cross is made.
30. The Bull of Pius IV. concerning the form of the oath on the profession of faith. — EDIT.)
31. As a perpetual memorial of this matter. — EDIT.)
33. The words printed as quotations, within inverted commas, are transcribed from late authors. I am not willing to name them.
34. But Palaemon ought to possess a good memory. — EDIT.
35. So as nothing can exceed it. — EDIT.
36. The following is Francis's translation of this quotation from Horace:
 "Wondrous indeed! that bulls ne'er strive to bite,
 Nor wolves with desperate horns engage in fight." — EDIT.
37. This quotation from Terence is thus translated by Colman: —
 "If he raves not of himself enough,
 Do irritate him." — EDIT.
38. The following is Lord Roscommon's translation of this verse from Horace: —
 "Medea must not draw her murdering knife,
 Nor spill her children's blood, upon the stage." — EDIT.
39. But now in these private communications they have no place. — EDIT.
40. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —
 "With what strong chain can I o'erpower
 This Proteus, changing every hour?" — EDIT.
41. Advice to the People called Methodists.
42. A Presbyter of a pillaged and groaning Church. — EDIT.
43. This Church which is torn asunder and groaning. — EDIT.

44. The following is Pitt's translation of these lines from Virgil: —

"Patriots who perish'd for their contry's right,
Or nobly triumph'd in the field of fight:
There holy priests and sacred poets stood,
Who sung with all the raptures of a God;
Worthies who life by useful arts refined,
With those who leave a deathless name behind,
Friends of the world, and fathers of mankind."

— EDIT.

45. This accommodated quotation from Terence is thus rendered by Colman: —

"Growing desperate, and making towards him
With a determined gladiatorial air."

— EDIT.

46. The very number of propositions extracted out of Quesnel's writings, and condemned as dreadful heresies in the bull Unigenitus! Exemplum placet! See how good wits jump! Mr. H., Father Walsh, and the Pope of Rome!

47. A doctrine without which there can be no Christian Church. All who do not hold it must perish everlastingly. vs. Justification by faith alone is not articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae. Some may doubt of it, yea, deny it, and yet not perish everlastingly. (Page 127.)

48. The only-begotten Son of God. — EDIT.

49. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis: —

"It breathes the spirit of the tragic scene."

— EDIT.

50. This quotation from Juvenal is thus rendered by Mr. Madan: —

"The censure of a severe laugh is easy to any one."

— EDIT.

51. Persons of dull understandings. — EDIT.

52. A doctrine without which there can be no Christian Church.

53. Page 35.

54. O rare Wesleyan Logic! He who is clear in making distinctions is an able teacher. — I bless God, I can distinguish reason from sophistry;

unkind, unjust, ungenteel sophistry, used purely for this good end, —
to asperse, to blacken a fellow-Christian, because he is not a Calvinist!

55. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

“Not half so justly matche’d engage
Bithus and Bacchius on the stage.”

— EDIT.

56. Two thunderbolts of war. — EDIT.

57. Hence proceed those tears. — EDIT.

58. This line from Horace’s Art of Poetry is thus translated by
Roscommon: —

“Forget their swelling and gigantic words.”

— EDIT.

59. “Behold the token!” — EDIT.

60. This quotation from Orvid is thus translated by Tate: —

“I see my error, yet to ruin move.”

— EDIT.

61. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Francis: —

“Yet soon as Fate shall round your head,
With adamant strength, its terrors spread,
Not the Dictator’s power shall save
Your soul from fear, your body from the grave.”

— EDIT.

62. A correct consideration of particular things which are capable of being
done. — EDIT.

63. Who, what, where, with what helps, why, how, when. — EDIT.

64. This quotation from Terence is thus translated by Colman: —

“Love in its last degree.” — EDIT.

65. This quotation from Horace is thus translated by Boscawen: —

“This is fell poison’s blackest juice.” — EDIT.

PUBLISHERS NOTES

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